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von

ADOLF M. HAKKERT und WALTER E. KAEGI, Jr.

BAND VIII



VERLAG ADOLF M. HAKKERT - AMSTERDAM
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FOREWORD

This is the first volume of *Byzantinische Forschungen* to appear under my editorship. It includes a broad collection of subjects and subdisciplines within the scope of Byzantine Studies. Although the majority of contributors to this volume happen to be North Americans, one wishes to emphasize that manuscripts in all major modern scholarly languages will be considered for inclusion in future volumes. Correspondence should be sent to Professor Walter Emil Kaegi, Jr., Department of History, the University of Chicago, 1126 East 59th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A., or to Adolf M. Hakkert, Calle Alfambra 26, Las Palmas, G.C., Spain.

Walter Emil Kaegi, Jr.

MAGIC AND SORCERY IN THE HAGIOGRAPHY OF THE MIDDLE BYZANTINE PERIOD

DOROTHY DE F. ABRAHAMSE / LONG BEACH, CAL.

In the last few years magicians and sorcerers, along with perennially popular witches, have come into their own as a subject for serious historical study. Enriched by the findings of social anthropologists, ancient and medieval historians have ceased to regard magic solely as *esoterica* or as a secret intellectual tradition. Rather, they have turned our attention to the functions of magic beliefs in a given society on both a 'learned' and a 'popular' level. In two recent examples of such an approach, Edward Peters and Peter Brown have described some aspects of the transformation of the ancient *magos* — an imposing possessor of knowledge and power, and rival to the Christian holy man — into the medieval servant of Satan, able to call on demons to effect his deeds, and, eventually, into the witch — the inherently evil figure who received her (or his) powers as a result of a

This paper was originally presented at the Sixth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference at Oberlin, Ohio, in October, 1980.

compact with the devil.¹ In the process, both would argue, human agents of evil lost their preeminence to the figure of Satan and his demons, who furnished an ever-present explanation for misfortune and took their place in theological writings and popular religious texts as the opponents of saints and Christian heroes. Belief in magicians and sorcerers survived in the early medieval west, but in a limited sphere, often as an adjunct to supernatural forces. In Byzantium, conservative and superstitious by reputation, it is believed that ancient traditions of 'learned magic' may have survived somewhat longer, and the legend of the compact with the devil through the agency of a Jewish *magos* took shape in the middle ages in the *narratio* of Theophilus.²

These and other recent studies have elaborated important conceptual distinctions which must be born in mind in any analysis of the nature and function of magic beliefs in European society. First, and most obvious, is the difference between learned magic and folk religion. Accusations of occult learning and practice, often

¹ The most extensive acknowledgement of historians' debts to social anthropology in the study of magic is to be found in the collection of essays offered to E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*, ed. Mary Douglas (ASA Monographs, 9), London, 1970, with essays by Keith Thomas, Alan MacFarlane, Norman Cohn and Peter Brown. For late ancient magic beliefs, see also Ramsay MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order* (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 95-162, and A.A. Bard, "The Survival of the Magic Arts" in *Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. Arnold Momigliano (London, 1963) pp. 100-125. The contrast between 'learned' and 'popular' magic is stressed by Edward Peters, *The Magician, The Witch and the Law* (Philadelphia, 1978), and R.A. Horsley, "Further Reflections on Witchcraft and European Folk Religion", *History of Religions* XIX, 1, (1979) pp. 71-95.

Transformation of the *magos*: Peters, 1-20; Peter Brown, "Sorcery, Demons and the Rise of Christianity" in *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*, 17-45 (*Religion and Society in the Age of Augustine* (New York, 1972), pp. 119-146). See also Pierre Riché, "La magie carolingienne", *Acad. des Inscr. et de Belles-Lettres: Comptes Rendus des Séances de l'année 1973, Jan.-Mars*, pp. 127-138, and Raoul Manselli, "Simbolismo e magia nell'alto Medioevo", *Simboli e simbologia nell'alto Medioevo*, (Spoleto, 1976), pp. 293-348.

² Brown, p. 35; Theophilus legend: L. Radermacher, *Griechische Quellen zur Faustsage (Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien, 206 (4), 1927.)* pp. 53-117.

associated with excessive reading of pagan works, have been shown in several instances to arise in contexts quite separate from the opposition to such folk religious practices as spells; charms, or potions by village specialists.³ Current theory also emphasizes the significance of the distinction between witchcraft and sorcery; that is, between the implicitly evil power of the witch and the impersonal use of learned techniques of power manipulated by the sorcerer.⁴ Finally, these studies have shown the importance of focussing attention on the causes and context of accusations of magic, rather than on the content of magical practices *per se*. Such an emphasis recognizes the fact that it is the accusers, not the practitioners, about whom historians can make meaningful observations; it also sees periods of intense accusation of magic or witch-hunting as moments of crisis in a continuum of belief and practice.⁵ In the light of the perspective described above, this study will examine some aspects of the tradition of the magician and the sorcerer in ninth and tenth century Byzantium as they appear in the most extensive *genre* of popular religious literature, the saints lives of the period. Hagiographical texts form an especially important source for such an investigation, not only because surviving works for this period are relatively plentiful, but also because the saint figured, in the medieval view, as the natural heroic opponent of the *magos*, the sorcerer, and their supernatural masters. This study will not attempt to establish the absolute existence or non-existence of magic (or its efficacy), nor will it consider whether any Byzantine religious

³ Horsley, "Further Reflections", pp. 71-77, commenting on recent literature. This distinction is strongly argued in Richard Kieckhefer's study, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundation in Popular and Learned Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976).

⁴ Max Marwick, *Witchcraft and Sorcery* (Harmondsworth, 1970), pp. 11-18, offers a succinct definition of anthropological uses of the terms.

⁵ Brown, "Sorcery", pp. 19-22; this perspective is especially strongly argued by Norman Cohn in *Europe's Inner Demons*, (New York, 1975), but it is also adopted in most recent studies of late medieval and early modern witchcraft and magic. For reviews of recent literature, see Peters, *Magician*, Appendix 3 (pp. 203-212), and E. William Monter, "The Historiography of European Witchcraft", *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 11 (1972), pp. 435-452.

practices should be characterized by modern scholars as magical. Rather, it will be limited to the use of terms for magic and sorcery — *μαγεία*, *γοητεία*, *φαρμακεία* — the situations in which they were employed, and the roles allotted by hagiographers to the magician and sorcerer. In particular, it will attempt to establish the extent to which conflicts between saints and sorcerers figured in hagiographic texts, and whether the sphere of the *μάγος* or *γόης* in such episodes may be located in particular political or social contexts. Hagiographical writers of this era, it will be argued, drew clear distinctions between learned and popular traditions of magic, and associated power of magic with three other specific situations.

If the fear of sorcery is to be measured by frequency of accusations of magic practices the sources examined here demonstrate, at the outset, that accusations of magic were relatively rare in mid-Byzantine saints' lives. Of the 48 texts examined, conflicts between saints and various kinds of magicians were found in just six texts, and suspicion of magic in two others.⁶ Peripheral references to

⁶ This study has been based on lives of saints, mostly contemporary, whose composition can be assigned with some degree of assurance to the period between 800 and ca. 1000. Texts examined include the lives of: David, Symeon and George (BHG 494), Eustratios of Augaros (BHG 645), George of Amasris (BHG 668), Gregory the Decapolite (BHG 711), Joannes Psichaites (BHG 896), Joannikios (BHG 935 and 936), Makarios Peleketes (BHG 10003), Patriarch Methodios (BHG 1278), Michael Synkellos (BHG 1296), Patriarch Nicephorus (BHG 1335), Nicetas of Medikion (BHG 1341), Nicetas Monomachos the patrician (BHG 1342b), Plato of Saccoudion (BHG 1553), Patriarch Tarasios (BHG 1698), Theodore of Studion (BHG 1754, 1755, 1755d), Theophanes the Chronographer (BHG 1787z), Euthymios of Sardis (summary, BZ 53 (1960) 36-46), George of Mytilene (BHG 2163), Nicephorus of Medikion (BHG 2297), Peter of Atroa (BHG 2364, 2365), Theoctista, mother of Theodore of Studion (BHG 2422), Andreas Salos (BHG 115z), Antonius the Younger (BHG 142), Athanasia of Aegina (BHG 180), Constantine the Jew (BHG 370), Demetrianos of Kythera (BHG 495), Euthymios the Younger (BHG 945), Nicholas of Studion (BHG 1365), Theodora of Thessalonica (BHG 1737, 1738, 1739), Euaristos of Studion (BHG 2153), Patriarch Euthymios (BHG 651), Basil the Younger (BHG 253), Blasius of Amorion (BHG 278), Irene of Chrysobalanto (BHG 952), Maria the Younger of Bizye (BHG 1164), Peter of Argos (BHG 1504), Thomais of Lesbos (BHG 2454), Empress Theophano (BHG 1794), Luke the Younger (BHG 994), Luke the Stylite (BHG 2239), Michael Maleinos (BHG 1295), Paul of Latmos (BHG 1474), Nicephorus of Miletos (BHG 1338). References to magic will be discussed below.

the existence of magic are more frequent, especially repetitions of popular appellations for prominent figures. In the light of the confrontations with the devil and the cures of demonized sufferers that continue to fill the pages of these biographies, the need to identify human episodes are not, as a recent study of popular demonology characterized them, a simple projection of diabolic work, and a constant source of opposition to saints in all phases of their activities.⁷ They may be characterized in the following manner.

First, the tradition of the learned magician. This figure, the inveterate seeker after dangerous knowledge in ancient secular wisdom, is the most familiar medieval *magos*, and the best known Byzantine example comes from this period in John the Grammarian. Legends of John's occult learning were widespread and, as has frequently been demonstrated, intrinsically connected to the religious and political opposition to his iconoclasm.⁸ In assessing the hagiographical use of the stories, it is essential to note that references to John as a *magos* are derivative, play no essential role in the story, and are included as a part of a well-known identity of the character in some of the most partisan biographies of the ninth century patriarchs and confessors. Thus, the *Vita* of Joannes Psichaita describes the Patriarch as "ὁ πρόδρομος τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου, ὁ τὴν Ἰαννοῦ ὑπερβὰς πλανήν ταῖς μαγικαῖς ἐπινοίαις" and as ὁ γόης.⁹ In very similar language, the biography of Makarios Peleketes identifies John as Iannes "ὁ τῶν κακῶν πρόδρομος ... Ἰαννῆς ... τις ὢν ἄλλος ταῖς μαγγάναις καὶ γοητικαῖς ἀπάταις τὴν τοῦ κρατοῦντος ὑποκλέπων ... in the course of a capsule history of iconoclasm.¹⁰ The concept of forerunner of Antichrist is repeated in

⁷ P. Joannou, *Démonologie populaire, démonologie critique au x^e siècle: la vie inédite de S. Auxence*, par M. Psellos (Wiesbaden, 1971), p. 20-21.

⁸ Earlier literature is summarized by Paul Lemerle in *Le premier Humanisme byzantin* (Paris, 1971), pp. 135-147. Discussion of John's occult learning in J.B. Bury, *History of the Eastern Roman Empire* (Repr. New York, 1965), pp. 443-445.

⁹ *Vita Joannes Psichaita*, (ed. van den Ven, *Le Muséon* N.S.3, (1902), 103-125), p. 117.

¹⁰ *Vita Macarii Peleketes* (ed. Van den Gheyn, *Analecta Bollandiana* 16 (1897), 142-163), 11.

the *vita* of the Patriarch Nikephoros, and is to be found also in the Pseudo-Symeon Magister.¹¹ John is called μαγιστράνης in the life of Euthymios of Sardis, the biographer of the Graptoi identifies him as an Egyptian *magos* dwelling with Iambros, and the lives of Theodore of Studion as a λεκανομαγίτης.¹² All of these epithets derive from the ancient Jannes-Iambros legend, and reflect the variety of invective freely associated with the Patriarch, but hagiographers added no new details to chronicle versions of the legend.¹³ The association of the Patriarch's magic practices with pagan learning is made explicit by the *vita* of Theodore of Studion; these two lives and the biography of Joannes Psichaita also contain allusions to the story of the Patriarch's underground laboratory.¹⁴ But it is noteworthy that these are brief references, never spelled out in the detail of the version of Theophanes Continuatus; clearly, they were intended for readers who knew the charges against John. The most explicit episode of magic practice attached to the Patriarch, the story of the three-headed statue, is not referred to in any hagiographical text.¹⁵ In light of the fact that all these references occur in the course of a repetition of the evils of iconoclasm, and in the works most bitter in

¹¹ *Vita Nicephori Patriarchi a. Ignatio* (PG 100, 41-160), 36: ὄντω τῆς Ἰαννοῦ καὶ Ἰαμβροῦ μεγαλορρημοσύνης ... ὑπὸ τῶν τοῦ σκότους εὐρέτων καὶ τοῦ Ἀντιχρίστου προσστατῶν καὶ προδρόμων ἡθέτητο...

Ps. Symeon Magister, Bonn, 4 (p. 606): Συμμιύστας ἐπιζητήσας εὐρίσκει Ἰωάννην τὸν λεγόμενον γραμματικόν, ἄλλον Ἰαννὴν μᾶλλον ἢ Σιμῶνα, ὃς καὶ Ὑλζιλὰς ὠνομάζετο, ὅπερ Ἑβραΐσιν ἐρμηνεύεται πρόδρομος καὶ συνεργὸς τοῦ διαβόλου. Here the phrase is applied to the Jannes legend.

¹² *Vita Euthymii Sardis* 231 (Summarized J. Gouillard, BZ 53, (1960), 36-46), p. 43; *Vita Theodori Grapti* (PG 116, 653-684), 18; *Vita Theodori Studi A* (PG 99, 233-328), 32; B (PG 99, 113-232), 61.

¹³ Jannes-Iambros legend; PW Bd. IX. 1, Col. 693-695. For artistic reflections of the 'Jannes' legend applied to John the Grammarian, see J. Gouillard, "Art et littérature théologique à Byzance au lendemain de la querelle des images", *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* 12 (1969), 1-13.

¹⁴ *V. Theod. Stud. A*, 32 B, 61. *V. Joannes Psich.*, p. 117.

¹⁵ Theophanes Continuatus, Bonn, p. 155-156. Discussion of the *stoichetosis*: L. Brehier, "Un patriarche sorcier à Constantinople", *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 9 (1904), p. 261-268; J.B. Bury, *Eastern Roman Empire*, p. 443, n. 3

their invective against the heresy, they can only underscore the essentially rhetorical use of a political legend.

A similar reputation for magic practice is attached to one other figure in strongly partisan texts of the early tenth century. Theodore Santabarenos, the one-time abbot of Studion and alleged confidant of Photios, is identified in the *Vita Ignatii* with invective and innuendo as possessor of: *μαντικῆς δέ, μᾶλλον δὲ μαγικῆς; φάσι, καὶ ὀνειροκριτικῆς, ἥτοι δαιμονίδους σοφίας* and the allegation is repeated in the Emperor Basil's last speech in the *Vita Euthymii*.¹⁶ "ἄι, ἄι, ὁ ἐπαοιδίας καὶ μαγανείας τεράτοποιός Σανταβαρηνός..." But Nicetas Paphlago qualified his account in the life of Ignatius with an important *φάσι* that referred the listener to reports heard elsewhere, and two other hagiographical references to Santabarenos are bitterly hostile in tone, but do not accuse the abbot of magic.¹⁷ Once again, the epithets are political in context, and they have been shown to be derived from written non-hagiographical sources. In these reports, Santabarenos's own learning is not made clear; his reputation is used, instead, to implicate by association the learning of Photios.¹⁸ Mid-Byzantine hagiography, thus, may be seen to have reflected, on occasion, suspicion of the learned magician. But it did not create such accusations, nor did this figure appear as a central concern of the *genre*.

Much more intrinsic, and dangerous, to the authority of a saint, was the second kind of magician — the pseudo-saint. In classic hagiographical tradition, demons in disguise could be distinguished from authentic visions by their smell, and charlatans easily gave

¹⁶ *Vita Ignatii Patriarchi* (PG 105, 488-574), col. 568; *Vita Euthymii* (ed. P. Karlin-Hayter, Brussels, 1970), p. 5.

¹⁷ *Vita Theophanis* (ed. Kurtz, *Mémoires de l'Académie Imp. de St. Petersburg*, VIII ser., III, 2, (1898), 1-24) 12: καὶ τούτου τὴν καρδίαν πρὸς φόνον ἀνάπτει καὶ τὴν γλῶτταν πρὸς λοιδορίας ὀτρύνας, δόλους καὶ συκοφαντίας συρράπτειν... *Vita Nicolai Studii* (PG 105, 863-925), p. 908, merely comments that Santabarenos held the abbacy of Studion while Nicholas was in enforced exile.

¹⁸ P. Karlin-Hayter, *Vita Euthymii*, pp. 37-55, shows the dependence of *V. Ignatii* and Ps. Symeon on a common written source and demonstrates the legend's implication of Photios.

themselves away.¹⁹ But ninth and tenth century texts contain a few indications of uneasiness over the line between the authentic miracle-worker and the spell-binder. The best known and most authentic incident is found in the confrontation between Peter of Atroa and Theodore of Studion, which is recorded both in the biography of Peter, written by his contemporary Sabas and in the three lives of Theodore of Studion. Theodore, according to both sources, was suspicious of Peter's extreme ascetic practices and reputation as a miracle worker, his suspicions focused on the fear that Peter might be a sorcerer — γόης — rather than a saint.²⁰ Only after a meeting and doctrinal examination was Peter 'cleared' and pronounced orthodox in a general letter.²¹ Peter himself reflected the very same fear in his account of the encounter of his great contemporary Joannikios with a *magos* named Gourias. In Peter's account (also to be found, somewhat shortened, in Sabas's version of the biography), the *magos* Gourias insinuated himself into the discipleship of the saint under false pretenses, attempted to call down a demonic host against the saint, then fed him a poisoned milk and honey mixture.²² What is particularly interesting in Peter's story is not the eventual unmasking of the Gourias or the saint's recovery from the poisoning attempt, but the identity of the *magos* Gourias is described as a 'misleader of people' (λαοπλάνος) who lived 'falsely and feignedly' an eremitic life, and was 'praised by all'. His attack

¹⁹ *Vita Gregorii Decapolitis* (ed. Dvornik, *Travaux publiés par l'Institut d'Etudes Slaves*, V, Paris, 1926, 45-75), 8, includes an assurance that a vision of the young saint is not demonic because of its light and odor: καὶ τῇ τῆς εὐωδίας συγκριτῶ παρατασῇ τὴν θανατηφόρον ὀσμὴν τῆς τῶν ἐναντιῶν σηπεδόνης ἑξαφανίζουσα. Other examples of demons appearing in angelic form are cited by Joannou, *Demonologie populaire*, pp. 11-13, 15.

²⁰ *Vita Petri Atroa* (ed. V. Laurent, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 29, Brussels, 1956) 37. *Vita retractata* (ed. Laurent, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 31, Brussels, 1958) *ibid.* V. *Theod. Stud.* A 59 καὶ γοητὰ ἀποκαλούντων δία τὰς γινόμενας ὑπ' αὐτοῦ θαυματουργίας. The accusation is recounted more generally in *Vita B* 117.

²¹ *V. Pet. Atroa* 38 reproduces the letter. In his commentary on the chapter Laurent argues for its authenticity.

²² *Vita Ioannici a Petro Atroa* (AASS Nov. II 1 (1894), 384-435) 21-22. *Vita a Saba mon.* (AASS Nov. II 1 (1894), 332-383) 18-19.

stemmed from jealousy of the saint's popular reputation.²³ In other words, this was a rival (but false) holy man.

A similar fear may be found in one of the episodes of the life of *Andreas Salos*, in which a pious woman became possessed by a devil after an unwitting recourse to a magician. The woman, we are told, wished to win back her husband from prostitutes, and had sought help from a man named Bigrinos on the advice of a friend. The author describes the mind-reading ability of Bigrinos, his popularity with crowds, and the woman's acknowledgement of his reputation for 'virtue in the Lord'.²⁴ The *magos's* cure was indeed effective — using oil, candles, and a belt, he made the husband develop a revulsion for his old habits, and accepted pay only as a donation to the poor for the salvation of the woman's soul.²⁵ As a part of the theme of the *Vita*, the real explanation of these acts was given by Andrew as attempts to counteract the protection of baptism, but the woman's confusion was not surprising. Bigrinos possessed the holy man's cardinal virtue of seeing into men's souls, and the objects and methods used in his spell all have parallels in the deeds of contemporary saints.²⁶ Like Gourias, Bigrinos was presented as a

²³ *V. Joannic a. Petro* 20: λαοπλάνος τε καὶ μαγομάντις ὑπάρχων, καὶ ... τῷ διαβόλῳ κατηρτισμένος καὶ χρηματίζων ἐρημικὸν τε βίον οὐκ ἀληθῶς καὶ ἐπιπλάστως ἐπανηρημένος καὶ μόρφωσιν εὐσεβείας συσχηματιζόμενος ἔχειν, τὴν δὲ δύνανται αὐτῆς πάντα ἡρνημένος, οὗτος ὁ παμμίαρος ἰδομένην ὑπὸ πάντων καὶ κατ' ἀξίαν εὐφημουμένην τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου ὀνόματος ἀνάρρησιν τοῦ θειοτάτου πατρὸς ἡμῶν μὴ φέρον ἐνηχεῖσθαι, φθονερῶ πάθει...

²⁴ *Vita Andreae sali a. Nicephoro* (PG 111, 625-888), 129-139. See esp. 129: Νῦν οὖν ἡκουσθαί μοι τὰ κατὰ σέ, ὅτι εἷς εἷ τῶν ἐναρέτων τῷ κυρίῳ, καθότι πολλοὺς κινδύνων ἐξήρπασας...

²⁵ *V. Andr. sal.* 130.

²⁶ The power of clairvoyance (τὸ διορατικὸν) was a standard attribute of the ninth and tenth century saint. A good description of its use and importance may be found in the *vita* of Irene, abbess of Chrysobalantos (AASS Jul. IV, (1729), 602-634), 30; a parchment spell and belt was used by Anthony the Younger to cure infertility (*Vita Antonii junioris*, ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, (Συλλογὴ παλαιστινῆς καὶ συρ. ἀγιολογίας I) *Pravoslavnyz Palestinskij Sbornik* XIX, 3, St. Petersburg, (1907), 186-216) 13). Holy oil and candles formed the standard medium for exorcisms. Some examples are collected by Joannou, *Démonologie populaire*, pp. 23-65.

popular public figure with a reputation as a seer rather than a sorcerer. The inclusion of the story in a text like the *Andreas Salos vita* means that it should probably be taken as an edifying tale rather than an authentic experience, but the hagiographer's fear was that of Peter of Atroa and Theodore of Studion. Bigrinos and Gourias were seen as powerful figures, able to call down phalanxes of demons, to induce terrible nightmares, and, if not to poison Saint Joannikios, at least to give him a very bad stomachache.²⁷ Peter of Atroa was, in the eyes of his contemporaries, either the most spectacular ascetic of his day or a fearful sorcerer. The same doubt might also be applied to any holy figure who strayed too far from accepted conventions of asceticism, as it was to Irene of Chrysobalanto, an ascetic abbess whose biographer twice felt compelled to raise and rebut the accusation that the saint was a magician rather than a holy woman.²⁸ Given the number and variety of mid-Byzantine ascetic texts, it is only surprising that the fear of charlatans is not more frequently expressed.

The incidents discussed so far have involved public figures suspected of practicing magic in the guise of religion or learning. But on a more ordinary plane, folk magic was an accepted part of Byzantine life, and saints lives of this period reflect the use of spells, charms and potions. Some texts indicate how common some of these practices were; thus, Theodore of Studion includes among the proofs of his mother's saintliness in lay life the fact that she did not make use of omens, amulets or spells in childbirth 'like other women', and one of the clients of the relics of Thomais of Lesbos was a man who had been enchanted by 'sorcerers and spell-binders' and had lost the use of his hand.²⁹ Hagiographers treated such instances as lesser sorcery, requiring no exceptional demonstration of the power of the relics of the saint; instead, the theme was presented in essentially the same manner as the commonplace *topos* narrating the inability of doctors

²⁷ V. *Joannic a. Petro* 22; a. *Saba* 19.

²⁸ V. *Irenis* 5, 74.

²⁹ Theodore of Studion, *Oratio Funebris* (PG 99, 884-902) 2; *Vita Thomais Lesbiae* (AASS Nov. IV, 1925, 234-242), 19.

to cure disease. The power of holy relics was presented as superior to magic, as it was to medicine, but hagiographers did not feel the need to expose the practitioners themselves as figures of evil.

Rather, magic of this sort was accepted in these texts, as in recent times in rural Greece, as possessing its rightful sphere.³⁰ Conflict with saints appeared when a magician invaded the territory of the ascetic. For example, among the cures at the tomb of Maria of Bizye was that of a man who went away from her shrine half-cured and fell into the hands of a 'φάρισακα γυναίκα' who 'treated him with tricks, spells and drugs, necessitating a return to the relics of Maria for complete healing.'³¹ The most elaborate encounter with sorcery of this kind was an act of aggression on the part of a *magos*: The *vita* of Irene of Chrysobalanto includes a long narrative describing the demonic possession of one of the nuns in the saint's convent through a spell cast, at long distance, by a Cappadocian *magos* employed by a disgruntled suitor.³² The account is almost certainly the most colorful version of magic in the hagiography of this period; it describes Irene's vision of the Virgin appearing at Blachernai to dispatch the appropriate saints — Basil of Cappadocia and Anastasia Pharmakoloutria — to Cappadocia to retrieve the magician's images. On the following day, the biographer relates, the startled nuns saw two figures fly over their convent and drop a package from the sky, proving to contain the parchment spells and two lead images of the nun and her suitor. The demonized nun recovered as the idols were melted in a holy lamp, releasing the sound of squealing pigs.³³ The story is to be found in a biography that is undeniably imaginative, but before it is dismissed as legend, some instructive features in the hagiographer's vision should be noted. It is strikingly similar to an eighth century miracle account of the relics of Saint

³⁰ See the narratives collected by Richard and Eva Blum in *The Dangerous Hour* (London, 1970) especially pp. 27-37 and 143-160.

³¹ *Vita Mariae junioris Bizyae* (AASS Nov. IV, (1925), 692-705) 28; *ibid.* ed. Kourilas (*Thrakika* 26, (1957), 111-147) 53-54.

³² *V. Irenis* 41-43.

³³ *V. Irenis* 44-50.

Anastasius in Rome which also features the possession of a nun through a spell cast by a distant *magos* at the request of an unhappy suitor. In both instances, the magician was remote from the event (Cappadocia and Sicily) and, in the Irene story, even the images need not be present to effect the enchantment.³⁴ But where the Anastasios story quickly shifted its focus to the possessing demon and its political affiliations, Irene's biographer concentrated his attention on the mechanisms of sorcery and their destruction. Although both writers found it easier to see a *magos* of such calibre practicing in a remote and perhaps symbolic spot, they cast him in the mold of the ancient sorcerer, the skilled manipulator of knowledge, rather than as an intrinsically evil figure.³⁵ Indeed, neither *magos* nor suitor is mentioned subsequently in either story; they figure solely as initiators of the conflict, and are never explicitly punished or condemned. Irene's action in the story was consistently defensive; through prayers summoning *her* supernatural host, her function was to destroy the images rather than to confront the *magos*. In this, she expelled the magic pollution invading her community; as in her other miracles and ascetic acts, Irene's powers were exercised to protect the sanctity of her convent and family. Here, as in the episode at the tomb of Thomais of Lesbos, it was not the existence of a magician, but his aggression against the authority of the saint that established their confrontation.

All of these episodes also represent, in some way, a concept of magic related to domestic spheres of life. Recourse to sorcerers is associated here with dangerous passages of life like childbirth, or in crises of love, as it continues to be in rural Greece.³⁶ The Byzantine 'wise woman' responsible for the client of Maria of Bizye may

³⁴ *Miracula romana Anastasii* (ed. Usener, *Acta M. Anastasii Persae*, Bonn, 1894), 14-20.

³⁵ Sicilian saints' lives more frequently include encounters with magic; in addition to the life of Gregory of Agrigentum, discussed below, the eighth century *vita* of Leo of Catania (ed. Latyšev, *Memoires de l'Academie Imp. de St. Pétersbourg*, VIII ser., 12, 2, (1914), 12-28), is entirely given over to the story of the *magos* Heliodorus, with the saint appearing only at the end of the story.

³⁶ Blum, *The Dangerous Hour*, pp. 270-275.

indicate that practice of such sorcery was frequently associated with women. The sources for these narratives may be significant as well, for all are found in the lives of women saints — two of them married lay women whose biographers felt compelled to defend the authenticity of miracle-working relics stemming from such an unlikely source.³⁷

One more encounter with magic remains to be considered in this study. The transition from magic to witchcraft in European belief involves the development of the concept of an implicitly evil power, often as a result of an explicit compact with the devil. Where sorcery is thought to be the acquisition of techniques, witchcraft is frequently inherited. Included in the life of Basil the Younger, an episodic work with some similarities to the *vita* of Andreas Salos, is an account of the enchantment of the author himself where, for the first time in these sources, a witch-like figure is encountered. According to the author, the wife of an employee on his estate seduced all in the vicinity by 'magic arts'; such was her power that anyone who attempted to resist her advances was struck with a serious disease or died. When the woman's attentions were focused on the author, he was visited with visions revealing her league with the devil and serious illness. The girl in this story is presented not as the possessor of spells, but as intrinsically evil, harmful, and irresistible to all on whom her eye fell. Her power came from her mother — an even more frightening woman 'able to stop the flight of birds or turn the courses of rivers, and possessor of other powers too terrible to name'.³⁸ This story, too, has precedents in earlier hagiography. The prostitute is a common figure, most often as an *exemplum* for conversion. In the *vita* of Gregory of Agrigentum a prostitute was used as the tool of magic schemers to convict the saint unjustly, but she did so reluctantly, and the story ended happily with her conversion and tonsure as a nun. Elsewhere prostitutes are seen as seductive or evil, but not, in this age, as possessors of supernatural evil. South Italian saints' lives, in particular featured seduction

³⁷ *V. Mariae jun.* 25; *V. Irenis* 70, 73.

³⁸ *Vita Basilii junioris* (AASS Mar. III, 24*-38*) 44-48.

attempts on saints by married women.³⁹ But in none of these biographies was there a suggestion of witchcraft. The Basil the Younger narrative presents a figure of supernatural evil, in league with the devil, if not specifically the maker of a pact with Satan, who inherits her powers from a mother who is described as a nature-magician, and whose gaze is a sort of evil eye. It is significant, however, that no trace of western literary traditions associated with witchcraft appears here. The author used traditional terminology for sorceresses in describing his enchantment; the powers of the mother, in particular, are closer to Virgil's description of the magic of a Carthaginian priestess than to western medieval witch descriptions. Virgil's lines, quoted by Augustine, spoke of a magic that could "Turn rivers backward to their source/And make the stars forget their course/And call up ghosts from the night". Absent from this is any sign of the western literary tradition of the *strix*, the night-flying and shape-changing witch.⁴⁰

What conclusions can be drawn from these episodes? Belief in magic and sorcery certainly was accepted by the writer of the mid-Byzantine saints' life; it is found in 'eyewitness' as well as distant and legendary lives. Traditional terminology for magic is employed, and no real distinction between magic and sorcery is used by these authors. The terms μάγος and γόης are generally used together, and if the *magos* seems to imply a somewhat more imposing figure, their arts — μαγεία and γοητεία — appear interchangeably. The use of spells and potions — φαρμακεία — is associated with magicians in these texts, but it is also applied to the lesser sorcery of the folk-magician. By and large, magic is to be found where one would expect to find it: in bitter religious conflict, at the margin between holiness and eccentricity, and in areas of life traditionally thought to be magic — birth, love and sex. And although hagiographical examples are too few in number to be really convincing, they may represent some development in the way Byzantine writers conceived

³⁹ *Vita Gregorii Agrigentini* (PG 98, 549-716) 53-55, 74: *Vita Elia Siculi* (ed. G. Rossi-Taibbi, *Vita di Sant'Elia il Giovane*, Palermo, (1962), 2-122), 12-14: *Vita Elia Speliotis* (AASS Sept. III, 848-887), 22-25.

⁴⁰ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* XXI, 6 (Tr. Dods, New York, 1950).

of magicians and sorcerers. The legend of the pact with the devil, if not explicitly repeated, is alluded to in several of these episodes, the Andreas Salos story explains the magician's acts as an undoing of the baptismal rite, and Basil the Younger's temptress exhibits some of the qualities of the witch.

But when these narratives are put into the context of the hagiography of the ninth and tenth centuries as a whole, the fear of magic cannot be seen as a major concern for Byzantine writers. What appears, instead, is a continuum of traditional sorcery and magic, partly accepted as a constant fact of life, which provided a real threat to Christianity and the power of the saint only in a few specific circumstances. On those occasions — when magic masqueraded as holiness, when it directly challenged the authority of a saint, or in particular cases involving sexual temptation — a major confrontation between saint and *magos* was inevitable. But, unlike demons, the varieties of magic do not appear as serious rivals to the saint; Byzantine hagiographers appear to have been willing to ascribe most evils directly to Satan and his demons. If witch-hunts and accusations of magic, as opposed to ascriptions of evil to supernatural causes, are to be seen as a measure of a society's need for human scapegoats, we can only conclude that ninth and tenth century Byzantium had no such crisis.⁴¹ The texts examined here exhibit a large degree of confidence in the power and authenticity of the saints, against which the fear of imposters and charlatans is not significant, and the belief in learned magic appears to be largely political in nature. On the basis of these sources, it is impossible to tell how much Byzantium deserves its image of a society especially steeped in magic; if we are to accept such a characterization, it must be on the basis of other sources or through our own definition of what constitutes magic rather than theirs, for the hagiography of the period, as a record of religious attitudes, clearly will not sustain any such interpretation.

⁴¹ For the development of these legends, see J.B. Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1972) pp. 45-100, (the fullest exposition of materials); Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, esp. pp. 110-120, 206-210, and Peters, *Magician*, Ch. 1 and 2. Cohn and Peters emphasize the literary and rhetorical nature of the evidence for nightwitches in the early middle ages, and criticize Russell's reliance on the materials.

A TALENT TO ABUSE: SOME ASPECTS OF BYZANTINE SATIRE*

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I begin in the best Byzantine manner with a quotation from a distinguished predecessor. Romilly Jenkins¹ once said: "The Byzantine Empire remains almost the unique example of a highly civilised state, lasting for more than a millennium, which produced hardly any educated writing which can be read with pleasure for its literary merit alone". A grim verdict, one endorsed by other experts,² and widely disseminated by those who hold it as an article of faith that great Greek literature could not by definition be produced in a period in which *apo* governs the accusative case.

To some extent, this attitude springs from a failure to realise that Byzantine literature does not begin and end with the 161 volumes of Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*. The blinkered view was perhaps excusable before Krumbacher.³ That it should have persisted in tandem with the opening up of the riches of Byzantine secular literature is a situation both sad for those who know better and misleading (to say the least) for those who do not. Also an oddly regressive one. When H. F. Tozer brought out his now somewhat antiquated, but in his day pioneering, article on Byzantine Satire in JHS 2 (1881), he expounded good historical and human reasons for

* This paper was first delivered to the Sixth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference at Oberlin, Ohio, October 24-6, 1980.

¹ R. J. H. Jenkins, *Dionysius Solomos* (Cambridge, 1940), 57.

² For notable instance, C. Mango, "Byzantine Literature as a distorting mirror", *Past & Present* 80 (1975), 3-18.

³ K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur*² (Munich, 1897).

assuming the existence of a satirical tradition.⁴ And he knew from Hase's *Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits*⁵ of a dozen or so examples. But the student who turns to Baynes & Moss⁶ will find only the *Philopatris*, *Timarion*, and *Mazaris* acknowledged, whilst the reader of Runciman's *Byzantine Civilisation*⁷ is given the same three titles and the flat statement "even satire was rare".

The briefest of surveys will disabuse the student of that notion. Of the unholy trinity of *Philopatris*, *Timarion*, and *Mazaris*, I leave the first out of account. Not for reasons of time, but because as I show in the forthcoming volume of *Yale Classical Studies* — self-advertisement being another Byzantine feature of the present paper — there is no warrant for the usual ascription of this dialogue to the reign of Nicephorus Phocas. It could be even later;⁸ or as early as the fourth century.

The *Timarion* (is its anonymity suggestive or just an accident of circumstance?) and *Mazaris* are usually classified together as Lucianic. A predictable description, and misleading. Paradoxically, these two pieces are both more and less Lucianic than their editors suggest. A comic catabasis to Hades inevitably reminds one of Lucian (equally, or so it should, of the *Frogs* of Aristophanes), but at least in the case of the *Mazaris*, given its fifteenth century date, may also comport parody of such romantic and serious literary descents as the *Apokopos* of Bergadis and the *Rima threnetike eis ton pikron*

⁴ *Art. cit.*, 233-4: "Repression, whether in the character of political despotism or of literary mannerism, - and both of these existed in the Byzantine Empire - has the effect of forcing genius into side channels, and criticism, when it cannot be exercised openly, finds for itself indirect methods of expression, which are usually characterised by a tone of bitterness".

⁵ Vol. 9 (Paris, 1813), 2, 129 f.

⁶ *Byzantium: An introduction to East Roman Civilisation* (Oxford, 1949), 239.

⁷ S. Runciman, *Byzantine Civilisation* (London, 1933), 247.

⁸ The most recent editor, R. Anastasi (Messina, 1968), assigns it to the mid-eleventh century, a notion accepted by C. Robinson, *Lucian* (London, 1979), 73.

kai akoreston Haiden of Johannes Pikatoros." Incidentally, those who seek to find both wit and universality in Byzantine literature should savour the fact that the plot of the *Timarion*, a man dying before his time and being restored to life, anticipates in large measure the recent hit movie *Heaven Can Wait!*

As Romano's admirable commentary¹⁰ shows, the *Timarion* is at times a veritable cento of Lucianic phrases. The *Mazaris*, by contrast, is not: the only formal debt is a punning use of the *Lucius* or *the Ass* title. Needless to say, the author will have been familiar with Lucian. If Treu and Barker are right,¹¹ the satire was in fact written to the order of the emperor Manuel 2, whose correspondence vouchsafes his own enthusiasm for Lucian.¹² Whatever be the truth of this,¹³ the *Mazaris* proper is postluded by three attachments: the narrator's resurrection dream and two letters. The form and purpose of these puzzle the most recent editors, leading them to speculation about sequels produced in response to the success of the main dialogue. In truth, it need be nothing more than imitation of Lucian's *Saturnalia*, where the main piece is followed by a group of mock letters.

De gustibus non est disputandum. So I shall simply disagree with Krumbacher's¹⁴ low opinion of the *Mazaris* ("Die Hadesfahrt des

⁹ On these, see (for example) L. Politis, *A History of Modern Greek Literature* (Oxford, 1973), 41-2.

¹⁰ R. Romano, *Timarione* (Naples, 1974).

¹¹ M. Treu, "Mazaris und Holobolos", BZ 1 (1892), 86-97; J. W. Barker, *Manuel II Paleologus* (Rutgers, 1969), 407, n. 19. The argument is based on a epistolary epilogue to the *Mazaris*, not found in the manuscripts employed for the older editions of J. F. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca* 3 (Paris, 1831), 112-86; A. Ellissen, *Analekten der mittel-und neugriechischen Litteratur* 4 (Leipzig, 1860), 187-250 (The *Timarion* is also edited here).

¹² The emperor quotes *Zeuxis* 2 in a letter to Manuel Chrysoloras; cf. Barker, op. cit., 179.

¹³ The most recent editors, J. N. Barry, M. J. Share, A. Smithies, and L. G. Westerink (Buffalo, 1975), regard this as impossible (Intro., xiv), preferring Manuel's son Theodore 2, Despot of the Morea, as the addressee.

¹⁴ Op. cit., 494.

Mazaris ist zweifellos die schlechteste der bis jetzt bekannt gewordenen Imitationen des Lukian''), my own enthusiasm for its crude vigour being helped by sharing the author's fondness for paronomasia. In its largely contemporary content, it differs markedly from the safe, classicising universality of Lucian's targets. One feature may be singled out, as having wider and important application. A favourite theme of the *Mazaris* is the iniquity of the medical profession. So also of the *Timarion*, a detail stressed in Nigel Wilson's introduction to the extract offered in his *Anthology of Byzantine Prose*.¹⁵ This is not a Lucianic feature, Lucian himself generally showing marked respect for the profession.¹⁶ But it is a traditional theme of Greek literature: witness the many epigrams in the Greek Anthology, or Athenaeus' caustic remark (15. 666a) "Were it not for the doctors, there would be nothing more stupid than the professors". Hence one of Romano's arguments¹⁷ for Nicholas Callicles as the author of the *Timarion*, turning on his medical expertise, is invalid.

"Lucianic" is also the epithet bestowed upon the prose satires of Theodore Prodromos, notably by G. Podèsta who edited three of them in *Aevum*.¹⁸ Here, again, we must discriminate. Self-evidently so is the *Bion Praxis*,¹⁹ though even here notice the difference of sale-objects between the two: philosophers in Lucian, men of letters and of public life in Prodromos. Not at all Lucianic is the *Demios or Iatros*, along with the movie *Marathon Man* one of the two most wincingly gripping comments on dentistry I have ever come across. In selecting this target, Theodore demonstrates some originality.

¹⁵ N. G. Wilson, *An Anthology of Byzantine Prose* (Berlin, 1971), 111.

¹⁶ H. Crosby, "Lucian and the Art of Medicine", *TAPA* 54 (1923), 15-6; J. D. Rolleston, "Lucian and Medicine", *Janus* 20 (1915), 86-108.

¹⁷ Op. cit., 28; cf. his "Sulla possibile attribuzione del Timarione pseudo-luciano a Nicola Callicle", *Giorn. It. Fil.* 25 (1973), 309-15.

¹⁸ *Aevum* 19 (1945), 239-52; 21 (1947), 3-25.

¹⁹ Analysed in some detail by Robinson, op. cit., 69-72. The *Philoplanton* is discussed by M. J. Kyriakis, "Satire and Slapstick in Seventh and Twelfth century Byzantium", *Byzantina* 5 (1973), 291-306.

Dentistry does not rate much space in ancient manuals; indeed, it does not even make the indexes either to Phillips' *Greek Medicine* or Scarborough's *Roman Medicine*.²⁰ In opting for a medical theme, Theodore Prodromos is conditioned by two things: literary tradition and the fear and hatred of doctors manifested, most strikingly, in the Lives of the early Byzantine saints.²¹

Fusion is an operative word in considering Byzantine satire. The third PtochoProdromic poem²² inveighs against abbots who feast in the midst of their starving monks, a theme transplanted from classical literature, above all Juvenal's Fifth Satire. Theodore Prodromos' tragic parody *Catomyomachia*²³ certainly owes something to Lucian's *Tragopodagra* (both merit comparison with Housman's *Fragment of a Greek Tragedy*). But as Mercati²⁴ pointed out, there is direct verbal borrowing in the prologue from Gregory Nazianzen, thence perhaps forging a link with that more solemn cento, the *Christus Patiens*, attached to Gregory's poems in the manuscript tradition, but possibly close to Theodore's own time. The mock inscriptional decree is another Lucianic device,²⁵ one employed in a satiric text published by Hunger²⁶ with the enchanting title *Gegen eine Byzantinische Mafia*. A character in this is Nyktibios, a name similar to Nyktion, one of the two demons who spirited Timarion down to Hades, whose name has caused some puzzled debate. Parody of official language is the style of the

²⁰ E. D. Phillips, *Greek Medicine* (London, 1973); J. Scarborough, *Roman Medicine* (London, 1969).

²¹ Cf. H. J. Magoulas, "The Lives of the Saints as sources of data for the history of Byzantine Medicine in the sixth and seventh centuries", *BZ* 57 (1964), 127-50.

²² Cf. Kyriakis, *art. cit.*, also his "Poor Poets and Starving Literati in Twelfth Century Byzantium", *Byzantion* 44 (1974), 290-309.

²³ Edited by H. Hunger (Vienna, 1968).

²⁴ S. G. Mercati, "Il prologo della *Catomyomachia*", *BZ* 24 (1923/4), 28, establishing a debt to Greg. Naz. Ep. 4 (PG 36. 25b).

²⁵ See F. W. Householder, "Mock Decrees in Lucian", *TAPA* 71 (1940), 199-216.

²⁶ *Revue des Etudes Sud-est européennes* 7 (1969), 95-107 (reprinted in the author's *Byzantinische Grundlagenforschung*, London, 1973).

Porikilogos and its imitation, the *Opsarologos*. These, along with various animal fables,²⁷ may be placed within a loose tradition extending from the fourth-century Latin *Will of a Pig* to Orwell's *Animal Farm*. Obscenity is another satirical technique, evidenced in a mild way by the comic catechism *Eis Pornas*,²⁸ and very much more powerfully by the blasphemous *Mass or Office of a Beardless Man*.

And this is only a portion of what we have. A little guesswork may be permitted on some of what we know we do not have. Nicephorus Basilakes, one representative of the twelfth century Patriarchal School so ably disentangled by Robert Browing,²⁹ wrote amongst many other things four satirical poems: *Onothriambos*, *Stupax or Paradeisoplastia*, *Stephanitai*, and *Talantouchos Hermes*. The first conjures up the term *onokoites*, applied by pagans to Christ,³⁰ also the ceremonial pre-execution parading of a rebel against the crown. *Stupax* (Rope-seller) is the nickname given to Eucrates in a fragment of Aristophanes.³¹ *Stephanitai* can connote a victorious athlete, the wearer of a martyr's crown, or a married man; also notice *Stephanopolides*, the title of a play by Eubulus. *Talantouchos* describes Ares holding the balance of war in Aeschylus, Ag. 439.

The abusive impulse was not, of course, unique to the Byzantines. It was part of their classical tradition, a point made very clear by Anna Comnena's employment of the Latinism *phamousa* to describe the libellous pamphlets flung into her imperial father's tent.³²

²⁷ For remarks on all of these, see Politis, *op. cit.*, 37.

²⁸ Text in Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca* 4 (Paris, 1832), 464-6.

²⁹ "The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the Twelfth Century", *Byzantion* 32 (1962), 167-201; 33 (1963), 11-40 (reprinted in the author's *Studies on Byzantine History, Literature, and Education* (London, 1977)).

³⁰ Tertullian, *Apol.* 16; compare the term *onobatis*, applied to an adulteress punished at Cumae: Plutarch, *Mor.* 29le.

³¹ *Frag.* 696. The subtitle reminds one of the epithet *paradeisogenes* bestowed upon Christ by Anastasius Sinaita, S. hex. 12 (PG 89. 1064a). Or there may be erotic possibilities; cf. A. Littlewood, "Romantic Paradises: The role of the garden in Byzantine Romance", *BMGS* 5 (1979), 95-114.

³² *Alexiad* 13. 1.

Michael Jeffreys' classic study of the political verse³³ correctly reaches back to the soldiers' songs and popular graffiti of imperial Rome recorded by Suetonius. A popular title or subtitle to Byzantine verse onslaughts is *skoptikoi iamboi*, denoting a tradition going back to Archilochus, albeit I know of no classical precedent for the unorthodox avenue of publication once chosen by the iconoclast emperor Theophilus: branding metrically irregular (deliberately so, to aggravate the shame!) verses on to the foreheads of the monks Theodore and Theophanes.³⁴

In his *Anatomy of Satire* (which largely ignores the Byzantine contribution), Gilbert Highet drew the following distinction: "Satire wounds and destroys individuals and groups in order to benefit society as a whole. Lampoon is the poisoner or the gunman. Satire is the physician or the policeman."³⁵ A just discrimination. Nevertheless, its real-life basis is certainly one reason why satire, unlike some other genres, was successfully pursued by the Byzantines. The acclamations of the circus factions³⁶ furnish one obvious example. It was pointed out long ago³⁷ that the scene in Procopius, *Anecd.* 15. 25-35, in which Theodora has a group of eunuchs mock the hernia of a venerable patrician in a parody of church responsions, contains an early example of the political verse. Theophanes³⁸ records a scene in which the mob obscenely ridiculed the emperor Maurice by so insulting a kidnapped victim who looked like him. Less noxious is the refrain chanted in comic honour of what

³³ M. J. Jeffreys, "The Nature and Origins of the Political Verse", *DOP* 28 (1974), 143-95.

³⁴ On this notorious (it is recorded in several Byzantine chronicles and histories) episode, see Krumbacher, *op. cit.*, 707.

³⁵ *Anatomy of Satire* (Princeton, 1962), 26; there is a passing reference (257) to Michael Psellus' diatribe against a monk (see below, n. 49), and to the *Office of a Beardless Man*.

³⁶ Cf. P. Maas, "Metrische Akklamationen der Byzantiner", *BZ* 21 (1912), 28-51.

³⁷ By D. S. Robertson, "Procopius, *Hist. Arc.* XV. 25-35", *CR* 57 (1943), 8-9.

³⁸ A. M., 6093, p. 282, 16.

the young Alexius did in Cheese Week, where Anna Comnena³⁹ finds it necessary to present a prose paraphrase of the meaning, implying a real or affected incomprehension on the part of her educated audience towards popular ditties. More virulent is the song against the empress Theophano, assuming that Morgan⁴⁰ was right to transform what used to be thought a Cretan prophetic text into this lampoon. Undoubtedly nasty were the songs made up and spread through the countryside by the Alexandrian populace about the alleged sexual liaison between Dioscorus and the nicely-named lady Pansophia Oreine, reported by the deacon Ischyron to the Council of Chalcedon.⁴¹ Equally unpleasant must have been the “filthy language” used even during the Eucharist by an enemy of that anonymous Byzantine scholar whose correspondence was published by Robert Browning.⁴²

The salient generalities may be drawn together in the person of Constantine the Rhodian.⁴³ He is best known to students of literature for his *Ecphrasis*⁴⁴ of the Church of the Holy Apostles, and for three frigid epigrams in the Anthology.⁴⁵ But tucked away in the relative obscurity of Matranga’s *Anecdota Graeca*⁴⁶ is a very different manifestation of his art. Constantine was playing that most popular of contemporary sports, denunciation of the hapless Leo Choerosphactes. His effort, well characterised by Robert

³⁹ *Alexiad* 2. 4.

⁴⁰ G. Morgan “A Byzantine Satirical Song?” *BZ* 47 (1954), 292-7.

⁴¹ For these, and similar effusions, cf. T. E. Gregory, *Vox Populi* (Ohio, 1979), 71, n. 38; 177, n. 91.

⁴² “The Correspondence of a Tenth-Century Byzantine Scholar”, *Byzantion* 24 (1954), 397-452 (reprinted in *Studies*...).

⁴³ His career is admirably delineated by G. Downey, “Constantine the Rhodian: His Life and Writings”, *Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend Jr.* (Princeton, 1955), 212-21.

⁴⁴ Edited by E. Legrand & T. Reinach, *REG* 9 (1896), 32-103, and by G. P. Begleri (Odessa, 1896).

⁴⁵ *AP* 15. 15-7.

⁴⁶ P. Matranga, *Anecdota Graeca* 2 (Rome, 1850), 624-5.

Browning⁴⁷ as “un poème bizarre”, consists of 34 lines, most comprising a single sesquipedalian compound in the manner of Aristophanes, accusing Leo of every conceivable and inconceivable vice.⁴⁸ The same technique⁴⁹ is used in this iambic exchanges over some ill-defined literary or philosophical matter with the (to us) mysterious eunuch, Theodore the Paphlagonian.⁵⁰ Constantine of Rhodes was no idle scribbler. Rather did he anticipate the modern “Dirty Tricks” brigades, making his name by producing scurrilous pamphlets at the behest of that sinister character, the Arab eunuch and secret police chief Samonas, himself no stranger to accusations of unnatural vice.⁵¹

The name of Lucian has kept cropping up, regarding whom a mistake may have been made by those unfamiliar with Byzantine habits. Thanks to the vitriolic notice in the *Suda*, and the 39 abusive epithets flung at him by scholiasts,⁵² Lucian acquired the reputation of being the Anti-Christ. The main villain in the story is Arethas.⁵³ But Lucian was no unique victim of his abuse. Many of the epithets assembled by Rabe are flung by Arethas at (for predictable example)

⁴⁷ “Ignace le diacre et la tragédie classique”, *REG* 80 (1968), 402 (reprinted in the author’s *Studies*...).

⁴⁸ A typical example is μοιχοπαιδοδοουλοσκανδαλεργάτα (24).

⁴⁹ Manifest on occasion in Psellus’ iambic onslaught on the monk Jacob: text and commentary in L. Sternbach, “Ein Schmähgedicht des Michael Psellos”, *Wiener Studien* 25 (1903), 10-39.

⁵⁰ Text in Matranga, *op. cit.*, 625-32. It is not clear whether Paphlagonian refers to geographical provenance or the blustering nature of Theodore: cf. Alan Cameron, *Claudian: Poetry and Propaganda at the Court of Honorius* (Oxford, 1970), 3, 245.

⁵¹ See R. H. J. Jenkins, “The Flight of Samonas”, *Speculum* 23 (1948), 217-35 (reprinted in the author’s *Studies on Byzantine History of the 9th and 10th Centuries*, (London, 1970)).

⁵² See the *index conviciorum* compiled by H. Rabe, *Scholia in Lucianum* (Leipzig, 1906), 336. They cover a wide range from atheist to pederast, with *bomolochos* prevailing as the most popular insult.

⁵³ A number of the manuscripts of Lucian contain his offensive marginalia, including the celebrated Harleianus 5694 in the British Museum by his own hand.

the emperor Julian, not to mention poor Leo Choerosphactes.⁵⁴ Nor was Arethas the only person to crack nuts with sledgehammers. Photius on John Philoponus, for instance, or Lucius Charinus is just as brutal.⁵⁵ Or Tzetzes on practically anyone, calling as he does one victim “Bull-father, moonstruck son of a goat.”⁵⁶ Scurrillity was but a tool of the Byzantine trade.

From title to Conclusion, I have endeavoured to point up both the particular and the universal nature and appeal of Byzantine Satire, again in disagreement with Romilly Jenkins who, in this paper⁵⁷ on the Hellenistic origins of Byzantine literature, concluded that “Satire, indeed, was to some extent revived in later centuries; but it is satire that has lost all urbanity and charm.” A touch of american content may provide an appropriate finale. Browsing through the new *Penguin Book of Insults* — a very Byzantine compilation, it might be thought — I discovered that when Theodore Roosevelt wished to abuse Woodrow Wilson, the best (or worst) thing he could come up with was “Byzantine logothete”.

⁵⁴ For these onslaughts, see L. G. Westerink's Teubner edition *Arethae Scripta Minora* (Leipzig, 1968), 200-12, 221-5. Collation of Westerink's *index verborum* (incomplete, but a valuable foundation for study) with Rabe's register of *convicia* discloses that Arethas employs a good third of the latter.

⁵⁵ *Bibl.*, codd. 55, 75, 114.

⁵⁶ *Hist.* 9. 958, 60-8; *Schol. Ar. Plut.* 43. 21-44. 2 (ed. W. J. Koster, Groningen, 1960). For a detailed analysis of the abusive language of Tzetzes, cf. Jeffreys, *art. cit.*

⁵⁷ “The Hellenistic Origins of Byzantine Literature”, *DOP* 17 (1963), 39-52.

EVAGRIUS SCHOLASTICUS: A LITERARY ANALYSIS

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The historiography of the Byzantine Empire is often approached as literature, and indeed literary histories of Byzantium would be smaller and much less interesting if historiography were to be left out. In the sixth century A.D., Evagrius Scholasticus (ca. 537-594) wrote his *Ecclesiastical History*,¹ which covers both secular and religious history from 431 to 593. Evagrius was a well-educated lawyer of high social position who was employed by Patriarch Gregory of Antioch, an important leader of the church, and his *History* is an important example of sixth-century Byzantine attitudes and literary style. Due to the high educational standards prevalent in the Eastern Roman Empire, Evagrius remains a self-conscious disciple of a conventional tradition which looks back to Homer and Thucydides as exemplars of elegant style, despite the fact that he is writing in a non-classical genre. His *Ecclesiastical History* also necessarily contains post-classical influences from other church histories, the Bible, and hagiography. Evagrius' stated purpose is to continue the history of the Church where others (Sozomen, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, and Socrates) left off. While his *History* cannot be called a scintillating work of art, it does occasionally surprise the reader with its literary merit, and it is thus interesting for more than the historical facts which it alone preserves.

¹ Evagrius, *The Ecclesiastical History*, with the scholia, ed. with introduction, critical notes, and indices by J. Bidez and L. Parmentier, Byzantine Texts (London: Methuen & Co., 1898, rpt. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert — Publisher, 1964), for the Greek text. The English translation is my own with some reference to the following: Theodoret and Evagrius, *A History of the Church*, trans. from the Greek, with memoirs of the authors, Bohn's Ecclesiastical Library (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854); Evagrius, *A History of the Church in Six Books*, trans., The Greek Ecclesiastical Historians of the First Six Centuries of the Christian Era., vol. 6 (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1846).

Evagrius, of course, uses his literary devices in order to express his own point of view, and his background as a provincial aristocrat affects his ideas and focus as well as his writing style. In general he is more interested in local affairs in Antioch than in events which occur far away from home.² Descriptions of theological controversies and civil wars, along with the author's moral judgments, permeate the work which is written using the reigns of various emperors as its framework.³ In terms of thematic division and focus, Evagrius' criteria for dividing his work into books are not clear. Sometimes the material covered in a given book has structural unity; however, the divisions often appear to be arbitrary, made for the sake of chronological order. Throughout the *History* he presents the details of the continuing and shifting doctrinal differences between those who supported the doctrines of the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon (451) and their opponents the Monophysites, and he uses his report on the Council as occasion for the longest and most detailed ecphrasis in the work. A primary concern is the unity of the faith, but nevertheless the *History* emphasizes the importance of ethical behavior (a classical tenet) more than it does any emperor's personal beliefs or the manner of his participation in Christian cult, which Evagrius appears to have taken for granted. (Indeed his mildness toward the heresy of Monophysitism, although he himself was a Chalcedonian, must reflect the mood of compromise prevalent in his time after the many concessions which had been made throughout the years since 451 in order to keep peace within the empire's population. He is much harder on Nestorianism, which had long been a dead issue for the empire).

Evagrius quotes several sources which express standard classical and Christian views on kingship. Heresy is viewed as a threat to the stability of the state, and emperors are supposed to keep the empire

² He devotes 31 chapters to Antioch and 22 to Alexandria, which receive more attention than Constantinople, which has only 19 chapters devoted to it despite its prominence as the capital of the empire.

³ Book I: Theodosius II (408-450); Book II: Marcian (450-457) and Leo I (457-474); Book III: Zeno (474-491) and Anastasius I (491-518); Book IV: Justin I (518-527) and Justinian I (527-565); Book V: Justin II (565-578) and Tiberius (578-582); Book VI: Maurice (582-602, but the *History* stops at 593).

prosperous by ensuring that correct doctrine prevails and by being ethical persons themselves. In the standard Byzantine view, therefore, there is no division between an emperor's spiritual and secular duties. Evagrius, however, demonstrably reserves his praise for emperors who embody moral virtues such as generosity (without regard to the economic needs of the empire) and self control (by not being slaves to pleasure), and he particularly appreciates Marcian (450-457), Tiberius (578-582), and Maurice (582-602) for possessing these virtues, while not dwelling on their religious stances in respect to Chalcedon. He even devotes a larger number of pages to them than to other emperors when the length of their reigns is taken into consideration. While he does not always praise or criticize an emperor directly, his great enthusiasm and praise for an emperor in the form of an encomium, juxtaposed with almost complete silence about the virtues of another or open disapproval of a debauched Chalcedonian, make his preferences clear.

Optimism about the empire and its future prevents Evagrius from being absolutely objective and from presenting a complete picture of it. His tendency is to stress not defeats but miracles, and he frequently omits negative information entirely. For example, he leaves out all mention of the loss of most of Italy in 568 although he happily reports its acquisition during the reign of Justinian. The *History* ends on an optimistic note, during a period of prosperity under Maurice for both Evagrius and the empire, just before this comfortable world is about to end. Evagrius does not see, or at least he does not relate and/or respond with any alarm to the major signs of trouble to come: the separate Monophysite Church, the increasing power and strength of the Persians and the Avars (perhaps because of the recent peace with the Persians in 591), and the tendency of the army to mutiny (Maurice will lose his throne and his life in 602 because of another mutiny).

In his presentation of his world view, Evagrius demonstrates that he is a product of his education, a conservative education which sought to preserve an ancient Classical tradition. Eloquence and fine writing cater to an established and cultivated audience, and literary works written according to tradition contain their own special brilliance and are attractive, at least to their particular public. Evagrius tries very hard to be part of this rhetorical tradition, but

does not always succeed.

Evagrius' diction is not poetic, for he makes very few allusions to poetry (only three references to Homer), and when he quotes classical prose authors, it appears to be for literary display and is not necessarily evidence of great learning nor of significant stylistic influence. Interestingly enough he shows no hesitation in using phrases derived from classical works in religious contexts. He may not have been familiar with all such authors, and his knowledge about the texts he mentions is probably due to their presence in school anthologies. There is, however, ample evidence in his *History* of his familiarity with the three basic divisions of rhetoric: forensic (judicial oratory), epideictic (ecphrasis and encomium), and deliberative (political oratory).

According to the rules of ancient rhetoric, a speech (in particular a forensic one) had four to six parts: *exordium* (the opening), *narratio* (statement of facts), *divisio* (forecast of main point to be made), *confirmatio* (affirmative proof), *confutatio* (rebuttal), and *peroratio* (conclusion). Some systems combine *narratio* and *divisio*, and also treated *confirmatio* and *confutatio* together. With these speech divisions in mind, an examination of the treatment of Nestorius by Evagrius is quite instructive. Evagrius thoroughly condemns Nestorius and declaims as if to an imaginary audience. His diatribe is not a normal forensic speech, so the discussion will bridge judicial and epideictic rhetoric. The passage, however, has a certain flavor that calls the courtroom to mind; Evagrius, after all, was a lawyer.

Portions of Evagrius' condemnation of Nestorius (I, 7) fit the rhetorical pattern of speech-making. Although it lacks an *exordium* in the sense of an appeal to judges, it begins with a combined *narratio* and *divisio* which includes, according to Evagrius, some facts not yet recorded by an historian before he himself found the information in a book written by Nestorius. He states that he will discuss the following points: ὅπως δὲ ὁ Νεστόριος ἐξηλάθη, ... τί μετὰ ταῦτα γέγονεν ἐπ' αὐτῷ, ... ὅπως τὸν τῇδε κατέστρεψε βίον, καὶ ὧν ἔτυχεν ἀμοιβῶν τῆς βλασφημίας ἕνεκα (how Nestorius was banished, .. what happened to him after this, ... in what way he died, and what retribution he received because of his blasphemy; I, 7). In this way he makes clear the main themes he will pursue in his discussion of the patriarch.

Evagrius then proceeds to present Nestorius' own statements about his exile (*confirmatio*), only to rebut them one by one (*confutatio*) over several pages. After inserting a Biblical allusion referring to the foolish man who built his house on sand,⁴ he goes on to relate Nestorius' version of his banishment in very long, periodic sentences, with a great deal of subordination and use of participial phrases. He usually maintains normal Late Classical rhythmic clausulae containing two or four syllables between the last two accents of the periods. He also makes frequent use of the dual and occasionally uses homoeoptoton (similar case endings in parallel constructions). A telling point — Nestorius' suppression of the fact that he renewed his blasphemy — is placed in a sentence consisting of only five words: Τὸ δὲ γε καίριον ἀπεκρύψατο (But he concealed the main point). Evagrius thus underlines the importance of this allegation through his unusual terseness. It is at this point that he begins to refute Nestorius' arguments and relates the details of the deposed patriarch's ordeals and sufferings due to his banishment as proof that Nestorius deserved to be punished. After being captured, then released, by Nomads, he died a deservedly miserable death. This argument is not based upon logic and to the twentieth-century mind is not persuasive. Evagrius' second "proof" is his use of Arius as an example, thus drawing a close parallel between the two men, their heresies, and their unpleasant deaths. In his third reasoned argument, Evagrius recalls a line from Pericles' Funeral Oration: ὥς τινι τῶν θύραθε σοφῶν εἴρηται, "τὸ μὴ ἐμποδὼν ἀνανταγωνίστῳ εὐνοίᾳ τετίμηται" (as has been stated by one of the heathen sages, "When one is out of the way, he is honored by unopposed good will").⁵ In other words, after death when there is no longer cause for jealousy, a person's true merits are clear. Since Nestorius has continued to have a bad reputation, as compared to Cyril of Alexandria whose memory is still lauded, this proves, according to Evagrius, that the former patriarch of Constantinople has no defense against Cyril of Alexandria and the decisions of the Council of Ephesus (431).

⁴ Matthew 7, 26.

⁵ Thucydides II, 45.

Continuing his case against Nestorius, Evagrius quotes several passages from the patriarch's letters which he believes settle the argument once and for all. He pretends to address Nestorius directly (apostrophe) and asks him to read his letter to the Theban governor for all to hear. This adds immediacy to the passage and makes it resemble a courtroom scene all the more. Evagrius quotes Nestorius' own descriptions of his ordeals where he asks for humane treatment from the Byzantine authorities. It is a pitiful account, but Evagrius shows no pity. In his opinion Nestorius deserved to suffer, and so his exhaustion and pain were not deserving of commiseration, but were to be considered proof that he had sinned. The *peroratio* or conclusion of his argument is in the same vein and is not very forceful. As a final degradation, Nestorius' tongue was eaten through with worms before his death and passing to greater punishment.

Evagrius' argument as it unfolds is not very logical, but in rhetoric the end often justified the means, especially if one had a moral purpose. No doubt he was completely convinced of Nestorius' perfidy, and sought to prove with all his literary resources and expedient arguments that the patriarch was guilty as charged of blasphemy and had received his just retribution. Never the less, Evagrius' choice of material for his proof undercuts his position. Nestorius' complaint to the governor is so vivid and moving that it creates pity, at least in a modern reader, where Evagrius sought to eliminate it. Thus, despite his rhetorical skill, his ability to marshal evidence and cast it in fine language, Evagrius misses the mark and does not entirely convince. His own audience no doubt was more sympathetic to his position.

Another important kind of rhetoric was epideictic oratory which included ecphrasis and encomium. There are two major ecphrases in Evagrius' *History*, his description of St. Sophia (IV, 31) and of Chalcedon (II, 3). An important contrast between Evagrius' treatment of St. Sophia and Procopius' in his *Buildings* is that Evagrius concentrates on describing the actual structure while Procopius is more interested in panegyric and it is difficult to visualize the edifice that is the subject of his attention.

Evagrius is very restrained when describing the events at Chalcedon where the Council condemned both Nestorius and

Eutyches (who started the Monophysite heresy). He does not criticize, praise, or interpret these actions; he merely reports. He does, however, devote a large portion of Book II to the proceedings at Chalcedon (II, 4, 18), held in a beautiful area, the precinct of St. Euphemia, which he takes the trouble to describe in great detail (II, 3). This ecphrasis is a virtuoso set piece designed to show off his talents. It begins by specifying the geographical setting for the Council:

Ἀλίζονται τοίνυν ἀνὰ τὸ ἱερόν τέμενος Εὐφημίας τῆς μάρτυρος, ὅπερ ἴδρυται μὲν ἐπὶ τῆς Καλχηδοναίων τοῦ Βιθυνῶν ἔθρους, ἀπώκισται δὲ τοῦ Βοσπόρου σταδίοις οὐ πλείοσι δύο, ἐν τινι τῶν εὐφυῶν χωρίων ἡρέμα προσάντει·

They met together therefore at the sacred precinct of the martyr Euphemia, which is situated in the city of Chalcedon in Bithynia, and is distant from the Bosphorus no more than two stadia, in one of those well-situated spots which has a slight incline;

Then he proceeds to take us along the walk-ways into the temple, and describes in detail the vista of land, sea, and the capital from that vantage point.

ὥστε τοὺς περιπάτους ἀνεπαισθήτους εἶναι τοῖς ἐς τὸν νεῶν ἀπιούσι τῆς μάρτυρος, ἑξαπίνης τε μετεώρους εἶναι εἴσω τῶν ἀνακτόρων γενομένους· ὥστε τὰς ὄψεις ἐκχέοντας ἐκ περιωπῆς ἅπαντα θεωρεῖν, ὑπεστρωμένα πεδία ὁμαλῇ καὶ ὑπτια, τῇ πόρᾳ χλοάζοντα ληΐοις τε κυμαινόμενα καὶ παντοδαπῶν δένδρων τῇ θεᾷ ὠραϊζόμενα, ὄρη τε λάσια ἐς ὕψος εὐπρεπῶς μετεωριζόμενά τε καὶ κυρτούμενα, ἄταρ καὶ πελάγη διάφορα, τὰ μὲν τῇ γαλήνῃ πορφυρούμενα καὶ ταῖς ἀκταῖς προσπαίζοντα ἡδύ τι καὶ ἡμερον ἔνθα νήνεμα τὰ χωρία καθεστᾶσι, τὰ δὲ παφλάζοντά τε καὶ τοῖς κύμασιν ἀγριαινόντα, κάχληκας τε καὶ φνικία καὶ τῶν ὀστρακοδέρμων τὰ κουφότερα μετὰ τῆς ἀντανακλάσεως τῶν κυμάτων αὐτῆς ἀνασειράζοντα. Ἀντικρὺ δὲ τῆς Κωνσταντίνου τὸ τέμενος, ὥστε καὶ τῇ θεᾷ τῆς τοσαύτης πόλεως τὸν νεῶν ὠραϊζεσθαι.

The result is that those going to the martyr's precinct do not perceive the approach, and suddenly they are on high ground within the temple; so that extending their gaze from a vantage place they see

everything: spread out, level, flat plains, green with grass, waving with corn fields, and adorned by the sight of every kind of tree; and wooded mountains rising gloriously to their heights and swelling rotundly; and various aspects of the sea, here gently heaving and playing with the shores in a pleasant and quiet way where there are calm areas, there boiling and wild with waves, drawing back the pebbles, seaweed, and lighter molluscs with the recoil of its waves. The precinct lies opposite Constantinople, so that the church is beautified also by the sight of such a city.

Here the effect is one of sudden awe due to the surprise of unexpected arrival at the church and to the beauty of nature in all its forms: productive, beautiful, calm, and excited. Civilization in the form of Constantinople is also viewed as beautiful. Returning to the church itself, its separate components (buildings, columns, domes, and so forth) are mentioned in detail, as is the reliquary of the martyr herself:

Τρεῖς δ' ὑπερμεγέθεις οἴκοι τὸ τέμενος· εἷς μὲν ὑπαίθριος, ἐπιμήκει τῇ αὐλῇ καὶ κίοσι πάντοθεν κοσμούμενος, ἕτερός τ' αὖ μετὰ τοῦτον τό τε εὖρος τό τε μήκος τούς τε κίονας μικροῦ παραπλήσιος, μόνῳ δὲ τῷ ἐπικειμένῳ ὀρόφῳ διαλλάττων· οὗ κατὰ τὴν βόρειον πλευρὰν πρὸς ἥλιον ἀνίσχοντα, οἶχος περιφερῆς ἐς θόλον, εὖ μάλα τεχνικῶς ἐξησκημένοις κίοσιν, ἴσοις τὴν ὕλην, ἴσοις τὰ μεγέθη καθεστῶσιν ἔνδοθεν κυκλούμενος. Ὑπὸ τούτοις ὑπερῶν τι μετεωρίζεται ὑπὸ τὴν αὐτὴν ὀροφήν, ὥς ἂν κἀντεῦθεν ἐξῇ τοῖς βουλομένοις ἰκετεῦειν τε τὴν μάρτυρα καὶ τοῖς τελουμένοις παρεῖναι. Εἴσω δὲ τοῦ θόλου πρὸς τὰ ἑῷα εὐπρεπὴς ἐστὶ σηκός, ἔνθα τὰ πανάγια τῆς μάρτυρος ἀπόκειται λείψανα ἔν τινι σορῷ τῶν ἐπιμήκων — μακρὰν ἔνιοι καλοῦσιν — ἐξ ἀργύρου εὖ μάλα σοφῶς ἡσκημένη.

The holy site consists of three immense buildings: one, open to the sky, is embellished with an oblong courtyard and columns on all sides, and after it is another which is very nearly alike in respect to its width, length, and columns, differing only in having a roof laid on. On its north side, extending east, is a building rounded into a dome, surrounded within by very skillfully elaborated columns which are made of the same material and are equal in size. An upper story is supported by them under the same roof so that it is possible from there, for those who wish, both to supplicate the martyr and to be

present at the sacraments. Within the dome toward the east is a splendid enclosure where the sacred remains of the martyr are stored in a coffin of oblong dimensions — some call it long — very skillfully worked in silver. (II, 3)

Evagrius successfully depicts Chalcedon and its surroundings, but to what purpose? The first few lines would have served to delineate its geographical position. The long description seems abruptly introduced and it digresses from the main subject, the Council of Chalcedon which has just been called. Elaborate ecphrasis was, however, greatly appreciated in late antiquity and would not have seemed at all unusual to a sixth-century audience. The long periods, the varied and expressive vocabulary, the ordered progression of the description as one moves toward and through the precinct, the vistas spread out below of land and sea, are all elegantly and clearly presented. Another digression about the miracles which occur due to St. Euphemia's relics follows immediately and forms a unit with the ecphrasis before the narrative returns to the subject of the council.

Another form of epideictic rhetoric, the encomium, is epideictic in its embellishment, but often deliberative in intent because it was written to serve as "a noble example for others to follow in their own efforts to achieve virtue and nobility in their own lives".⁶ Its purpose was not to present history, but to offer a perfect picture; faults and weaknesses were therefore omitted. A typical royal encomium included information about ancestry and birth, nurture and education (including portents), public life in the form of deeds in peace and war, and private life (family, death, and so forth).⁷

Evagrius' portrait of the Emperor Marcian (450-457) is limited, but quite conventional. It presents in some detail Marcian's race,

⁶ Donald Lemen Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), p.136.

⁷ Cf. this incident to the one described in the childhood of Basil I (867-886) in Theophanes Continuatus, book V, *de Basilio Macedone*, ed. Immanuel Bekker, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, vol. 32 (Bonn: Weber, 1838), §5. Also cf. discussion in Romilly Jenkins, "The Classical Background of the Scriptores post Theophanem," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol. 8 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 25, for other examples. A similar incident (with doves in place of eagles) is to be found in Horace, *Odes* III, 4, 9. The motif is probably even older.

parentage, and fortune before becoming emperor. The historian defines his subject precisely: ἱστορήσωμεν τίς τε ἦν καὶ ὅθεν, καὶ ὅπως τὴν βασιλείαν Ῥωμαίων ἀνεδήσατο· οὕτω τε τὰ ὑπ' αὐτῷ γεγεννημένα κατὰ τοὺς ἰδίους ἀποθώμεθα καιρούς (I will give an account of who he was and from where, and how he become emperor. And then I will set forth what occurred during his reign in chronological order; II, 1).

The tale of Marcian's fortunes as a young man unfolds in short narrative sentences. His piety toward a dead man's body is praised; later when Marcian is accused of murdering the man, Divine Providence intervenes. Having been reprieved through his good fortune, the future emperor finds no difficulty in enrolling in the army, in a rank higher than customary; he takes the place of a dead soldier named Augustus. Since Marcian also assumes the name of Augustus (meaning emperor), Evagrius has a chance to play with words and laud Marcian at the same time:

ὥς φθᾶσαι τοῦνομα τὴν προσηγορίαν τῶν ἡμετέρων βασιλέων, τὸ καλεῖσθαι Αὐγουστοὶ μετὰ τῆς ἀλουργίδος περιβαλλομένων· ὥσπερ οὐκ ἀνασχομένου τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐπ' αὐτῷ χωρὶς τῆς ἀξίας μείναι, μηδ' αὖ πάλιν τῆς ἀξίας ἕτερον ὄνομα ζητησάσης εἰς σεμνολόγημα, ὥστε κύριον καὶ προσηγορικὸν τὸ αὐτὸ καθεστάναι, διὰ μιᾶς κλήσεως τῆς τε ἀξιώσεως τῆς τε προσηγορίας σημαινομένων.

Thus did his name anticipate the appellation of our emperors who call themselves Augusti along with putting on the purple. It was as if the name was not content to remain with him without the rank, nor again did the rank seek another name for the sake of pride, so that his personal name and his cognomen were the same, and his rank and appellation indicated by the same name. (II, 1)

A further portent of Marcian's accession to the imperial power is related; when a captive of the Vandal king Genseric, Marcian was shielded from the hot sun by a flying eagle.⁷ The discussion then turns to Marcian's virtue as an emperor:

Ἦν ὁ Μαρκιανὸς τὰ πρὸς θεὸν εὐσεβής, τὰ πρὸς πολιτευομένους δίκαιος· πλοῦτον ἡγούμενος οὐ τὸν ἀπόθετον, οὐδὲ μὴν τὸν ἀπὸ

δασμολογιῶν συμφορούμενον, ἓνα δὲ μόνον τὸν τοῖς δεομένοις ἐπαρκεῖν δυνάμενον καὶ τοῖς πολλὰ κεκτημένοις ἀσφαλῆ παρέχειν τὸν πλοῦτον· φοβερὸς οὐκ ἐν τῷ τιμωρεῖσθαι, ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ τιμωρήσεσθαι· δι' ἧ καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἄθλον ἀρετῆς, οὐ κληρονομίαν ἔσχε.

Marcian was pious toward God and just toward his citizens. He regarded wealth not that which was stored up, nor that which was gathered from collections, but, one thing alone, being able to assist those in need and make wealth secure for those who possessed a great deal. He was regarded with fear, not in punishing but in the threat of punishing in the future. On this account he possessed the sovereignty as a prize for his virtue, not as an inheritance. (II, 1).

These are commonplaces; a ruler was supposed to care for his subjects. Evagrius, in defining Marcian's piety and virtue as a lack of avarice (along with avoidance of cruelty toward his subjects) is speaking from an aristocratic point of view. He makes these statements about Marcian before any mention of Chalcedon, and the above virtues could belong to a moral pagan as well as to a Christian emperor. Evagrius says little else about Marcian's deeds save that he convened Chalcedon and upheld its provisions (II, 1, 5).

The passage in question is not a complete royal encomium (βασιλικὸς λόγος), for, while it covers (in part) the emperor's background and youth up to the point of receiving the empire, it offers only sketchy information about his deeds in time of peace and war, hardly mentions his private life (except for his political marriage to Theodosius II's sister), and does not dwell upon his death or funeral.⁸ Such portraits, even when complete, were more moral *exempla* than historical analyses,⁹ and do not describe complete individuals. The attribution to Divine Providence of Marcian's escape from execution and the pun on his name are conventions which are to be found in both Christian encomia and hagiography.¹⁰

⁸ Cf. Jenkins, p. 21.

⁹ Cf. Jenkins, p. 20.

¹⁰ Paul J. Alexander, "Secular Biography at Byzantium", *Speculum*, 15 (1940), p. 200.

Marcian's justice (one of the four cardinal virtues) and piety are stressed over all else, but we cannot know him as a man complete with defects through an encomium which by definition seeks only to praise.

Evagrius' artistic ability in writing an encomium comes into focus more clearly when he expresses his admiration of the Emperor Maurice (582-602) whom he knew personally. In fact he is so enthusiastic about him that he inserts his portrait prematurely in the midst of his discussion of Tiberius' reign (578-582).

Evagrius relates the emperor's descent along with the four cardinal virtues he possesses: prudence (V, 19), temperance (V, 19), manliness (V, 19, 20), and justice (VI, 2). Prodigies foretold his accession to the throne (V, 21), and he was both a successful soldier (V, 19, 20) and statesman in foreign affairs (VI, 17-19). The details of his wedding to the Emperor Tiberius' daughter Augusta are also given (V, 22; VI, 1). All five major parts of an encomium are thus present: descent, life leading up to becoming emperor, deeds of war and of peace, and private life. The picture remains flat, however, for Maurice is described only in conventional ways and we miss the man. In Evagrius' *History* Maurice makes no errors, but we know from other sources that his reign was not unremittingly successful.

Evagrius is more interested in rhetorical display than in a clear exposition of Maurice's character. For example, in his discussion of Maurice's prudence, after inserting a reference to Homer to make an erudite contrast to the emperor's behavior, Evagrius inserts a paradox and the imagery of the hippodrome:

Ἀμαθίαν δὲ τοῦ θράσους τὴν μητέρα καὶ δειλίαν τὴν ἀπωχισμένην καὶ σύνθυρον αὐτῇ οὕτως ἀπόσατο, ὥς τὸ μὲν κινδύνευμα εὐβουλίαν εἶναι, τὸν δὲ ὄκνον ἀσφάλειαν, ἀνδρείας τε καὶ φρονήσεως τοῖς καιροῖς ὀχουμένων καὶ τὰς ἡγίας πρῶτανευόντων πρὸς ὃ ἂν ἡ χρεία ἐπιτάττοι, καὶ τὴν ὕφεσιν καὶ ἐπίτασιν αὐτῷ τῶν ὁρμῶν μέτρῳ τινὶ καὶ ρυθμῷ γίνεσθαι.

So much did he thrust away ignorance, the mother of audacity, and cowardice which is both a foreigner and a neighbor to ignorance, that making dangerous ventures was soundness of judgment for him and hesitation represented safety; and both bravery and practical wisdom were charioteers of opportunity and directed the reins wherever

necessity might require, so that both the moderation and intensification of his efforts took place with due measure and proportion. (V, 19)

The language is difficult because it is ornate, and these commonplaces could be applied to anyone. Maurice as an individual is missing.

Evagrius is also intent on fine phrases in his description of Maurice's wedding:

Παῖσαν δὲ τῷ γάμῳ θεοσέβειά τε καὶ βασιλεία δορυφοροῦσαί τε ἐκπρεπέστατα καὶ δωροφοροῦσαι τὰ τιμώτατα. Ἡ μὲν γὰρ πατέρα τε καὶ μητέρα παρείχετο, σεμνῇ πολιᾷ αἰδεσίμῳ τε ῥυτίδι τὸν γάμον ἀγιάσοντας, οὐχ ἱστορηθὲν ἐς βασιλέας πώποτε. ἀδελφοὺς τε καλοὺς καὶ ὠραίους τὴν γαμήλιον πομπὴν σεμνύνοντας. Ἡ δὲ γε ἀμπεχόνην χρυσόπαστον, ἀλουργίδι καὶ λίθοις Ἰνδῶν κεκοσμημένην, στεφάνους τε χρυσῷ πολλῷ καὶ ταῖς ἐκ λίθων ποικιλίαις τε καὶ διανυγείαις τιμαλφεστάτους, ἅπαντάς τε τοὺς ἐν ἀξιώσει περὶ τὴν αὐλὴν καὶ στρατείαις ἐναριθμίους, κηρούς τε γαμηλίους ἐξάπτοντας μεγαλοπρεπῶς τε ἐσταλμένους καὶ ἐξ ὧν γνωρίζοντο, καὶ τὴν νυμφαγωγὸν πανήγυριν ἀνυμνοῦντας· ὥστε τῆς πομπῆς ἐκείνης μηδὲν τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις σεμνοπρεπέστερον ἢ εὐδαιμονέστερον γενέσθαι πώποτε.

Both Reverence and Royalty were present at the marriage, acting as escorts in a very distinguished manner and bearing very valuable gifts. For the one supplied a father and a mother to sanctify the marriage with honorable grey hair and venerable wrinkles — not ever yet recorded in the history of sovereigns — and noble brothers in the bloom of life to give dignity to the wedding procession. The other provided clothing shot with gold, decorated with purple and gems from India, and very costly crowns with abundant gold and variety and splendor of gems, as well as all those who were esteemed in court offices and in the military, who kindled the wedding tapers, arrayed in magnificent and distinguishing costumes, and who hymned the bridal festivities. The result was that never was there anything more majestic or happy among men than this procession. (VI, 1)

Through the ornate language and rhetorical exaggeration of this ecphrasis, Evagrius evokes the imperial marriage with all the

resources at his command, reflecting the Byzantine love of pageantry and wealth. He even introduces allegory (Reverence and Royalty) into his description, and his balanced phrases and complicated imagery belong to the mannered writing so dear to his time. Although it does not contribute anything but superficial praise to his portrait of Maurice, Evagrius' elaborate ecphrasis of Maurice's wedding is a fine example of his writing ability at its best, understood within the Byzantine tradition.

Despite his tendency to adhere to the formal rules of rhetoric in a rather dry manner, Evagrius occasionally shows a talent for depicting minor incidents in a vivid manner as when he relates the attempt of the bishops of Epiphania (Evagrius' birthplace) and Arethusa to depose Severus, the Monophysite patriarch of Antioch, by sending a deacon to him with a writ:

Βιβλίον καθαιρέσεως αὐτῷ διαπέμπονται ἐσέτι τὴν Ἀντιόχου πόλιν ἐπισκοποῦντι. Ἐγχειρίζουσι δὲ τὸ βιβλίον Αὐρηλιανῷ, τῷ τῶν διακόνων πρώτῳ τῆς Ἐπιφανέων· ὃς ἐπειδὴ τὸν Σευῆρον ἔδεδόκει καὶ τὸν τῆς τοσαύτης ἐπισκοπῆς ὄγκον, ὅτε τὴν Ἀντιόχου κατελήφει, ἐσθῆτα γυναικίαν ἑαυτῷ περιθείς προσῆει τῷ Σευῆρῳ, ἀκκιζόμενός τε καὶ θρυπτόμενος καὶ διὰ πάντων τὸ εἶναι γυνὴ σχηματιζόμενος, καὶ τὸ κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς φάρος μέχρι τῶν στέρνων καθεῖς, ὀλοφυρόμενός τε καὶ μύχιον ποτνιώμενος, ἱκετηρίας τινὸς προσήματι προϊόντι τῷ Σευῆρῳ τὴν καθαίρεσιν ἐπιδίδωσι· καὶ πάντας διαλαθὼν τοῦ ἐπομένου ἔξεισιν ὁμίλου καὶ δρασμῷ τὴν σωτηρίαν ὠνεῖται, πρὶν τὸν Σευῆρον τὰ ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ κείμενα γνῶναι.

They sent a document of deposition to him while he was still bishop of Antioch. They entrusted the document to Aurelian, chief of the deacons of Epiphania. Since he was afraid of Severus and the majesty of so great a bishopric, when he reached Antioch, after donning female garb, he approached Severus affecting modesty and coyness and in every way posturing like a woman. And letting the mantle over his head fall down to his chest, while wailing and imploring loudly he gave the deposition to the approaching Severus, pretending to submit some petition. And, escaping everyone's notice, he went out from among the attendant crowd and purchased safety by flight before Severus had learned what was in the document. (III,34)

This vignette is written in a narrative style which is somewhat paratactic and more relaxed than Evagrius' usual style of writing. He evokes the scene pictorially and dramatically, with a rare touch of humor. It is no doubt a story which was locally known in his native district and he tells it well.

Deliberative or political oratory is the third division of rhetoric, and the one true speech in Evagrius' History (VI,12) is a model of deliberative rhetoric, designed to paint his patron, Patriarch Gregory, in the finest possible light. He is portrayed as the only person able to persuade the Byzantine troops, which had mutinied over pay cuts and other issues during Maurice's reign (ca. 588), to yield to higher authority.

The patriarch's oration to the troops begins with an *exordium* well designed to placate the soldiers. In a deliberative speech, it was very important to establish *ethos* (the character and good will of the speaker), develop *pathos* (response on the part of the audience), and convince through *logos* (persuasive arguments). The patriarch makes an immediate appeal to the soldiers by reminding them how he had helped them in the past in time of need. Throughout the *exordium* he avoids all mention of the word "mutiny", using instead circumlocutions such as *τά παρόντα* (the present circumstances) and the fact that they were *ἀστρατήγητοι* (without a general). It is not until the end of the *exordium* that a sentence (which really represents the *narratio*) is somewhat more explicit: *εἰ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς στρατηγήσαντας ὑμῶν τὴν λύπην ἐκληρώσασθε* (even though you were grieved by your former generals). Patriarch Gregory thus maintains a conciliatory tone. The *exordium* avoids labeling the soldiers' actions as a mutiny, and even goes so far as to qualify their guilt by stressing the point that they had managed to defeat the Persians in battle without a leader. He conjectures that perhaps Divine Providence had had a hand in the affair, demonstrating the valor of the Romans to the Persians on the one hand, and giving the men an opportunity to prove their loyalty to the Roman State on the other; thus they received forgiveness for mutinying against their leaders.

In the main part of the oration, the proof (or *confirmatio*). Gregory discusses what is possible, necessary, and expedient, in

order to persuade the troops to yield to authority. He begins with the possibility of amnesty which had been offered by the emperor, inserting a Biblical allusion in reference to the emperor's heart being in the hand of God, a standard topos of Byzantine imperial rhetoric.¹¹ He emphasizes the emperor's belief that God had given the soldiers victory because they were loyal Romans. Patriarch Gregory then goes on to insist that it is necessary to accept the offer of amnesty before the critical moment slips by. At this point in the argument, Gregory uses the first personal plural and unites himself, in a way, with the soldiers: καὶ μὴ καταπροδῶμεν τὸν παρόντα καιρὸν (and let us not betray utterly the present opportunity). He thus introduces a maxim about the critical moment and goes on to appeal to their memories of their ancestors' obedience and valor. With this sort of patriotism, the ancient Romans had conquered the world.

Gregory's remaining arguments follow much the same pattern; maxims, appeals for loyalty to the state, are mingled with threats which gradually increase in severity. An *exemplum* of a son who was killed by his father for disobedience despite his valor (threat) is followed by a maxim about the need for leaders and followers to work together to achieve any success. He then returns to the specific issue at hand and urges them to prove their loyalty once and for all and return to obedience. After a final threat that he will wash his hands of them if they do not yield, Gregory emphasizes the expediency of his advice. Pretenders to the throne usually fail and they will find it difficult to obtain supplies without fighting against their fellow citizens. Here an oblique allusion to the deliberative speech of the Corinthians in Sparta against the Athenians is made. The Corinthians had stressed the difficulty inland powers had in provisioning themselves in a struggle against Athens unless they supported the coastal powers, because Athens ruled the sea:

πόθεν γὰρ ἡ τῶν ὠραίων συγκομιδὴ, ἢ ὧν ἐξ ἀντίληψιν ἡ θάλασσα
τῇ ἡπίερω δίδωσιν;

¹¹ Proverbs 21, 1. This is a standard topos of Byzantine rhetoric. See Francis Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Philosophy: Origins and Background*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1966), II, p. 625.

For from where will you gather the seasonal fruits or those things in turn which the sea gives to the mainland? (VI, 12)

χαλεπωτέραν ἔξουσιν τὴν κατακομιδὴν τῶν ὥραίων καὶ πάλιν ἀντίληψιν ὧν ἡ θάλασσα τῇ ἡπείρῳ δίδωσι.

They [the inland powers] will have a more difficult time exporting their seasonal fruits and receiving in turn those things which the sea gives to the mainland. (Thucydides I,120,1)

The patriarch then returns to using the first person plural, exhorting the soldiers in his peroration to benefit both themselves and the state, and drawing a parallel between their receipt of amnesty and the saving grace of Easter which was about to take place:

Δόντες οὖν δεξιὰς καὶ ἑαυτοῖς καὶ τῷ πολιτεύματι τὸ συνοῖσον σκοπήσωμεν, ὅταν καὶ τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ σωτηρίου πάθους καὶ τῆς παναγίας ἀναστάσεως Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ συνεπιλαμβανομένας ἔχωμεν.

Let us therefore give our pledges and consider what is advantageous both to ourselves and to the state, at a time when we also have the days of the saving Passion and of the most holy Resurrection of Christ our God supporting [this action]. (VI,12)

A fine, moving speech embellished with maxims as well as allusions to both Scripture and classical literature, it remains to be considered whether or not it represents the oration as delivered. Evagrius implies that it is: παρ' οὓς αὐτὸς γενόμενος, καὶ ταῦτα κλινοπετῆς ὑπάρχων, ἔλεξε τοιάδε (He appeared before them, even though he was bedridden, and spoke as follows; VI,11). As Evagrius does not say specifically that he is quoting word for word, there is room for conjecture that the speech, as recorded in the *History*, is a reworking of the tenor of the actual exhortation given by Gregory. Even though the patriarch was speaking to army leaders and not to the common soldiers (VI, 11), there remains the strong possibility that the elaborate Greek and erudite allusions of the speech would not have been understood, much less appreciated by professional soldiers. The periods are long, the perfect is used, and in general the

language does not appear to be suited to the audience, one of the cardinal rules of rhetoric. Patriarch Gregory's own ability to write such an oration is in question, given that he grew up in a monastery (V,6) and that Evagrius never praises him for his eloquence. If the speech was delivered as written, it is possible, although impossible to prove, that Evagrius himself composed it.

Evagrius' literary style is thus demonstrably close to a conservative and conventional rhetorical tradition which often, but not always, prevents him from writing clear, lucid prose and from giving more than one-dimensional portraits of his main characters. Sometimes his rhetorical excursions are digressions from his main point and are purely decorative; at other times he attempts to enhance his subject with fine language and distracting turns of phrase. Photius' comment on his style has some justification: ἔστι δὲ τὴν φράσιν οὐκ ἄχαρις, εἰ καὶ πῶς περιτεύσθαι ἐνίστε δοκεῖ (his style is not deprived of grace, despite a tendency toward prolixity);¹² for Evagrius' prose style is often pleasant to read. He presents his points of view through his choice of material and direct statement rather than through vivid action or dialogue, and portrays characters in much the same way. He endeavors to impart his optimism and enthusiasm about Maurice's reign, for example, but his one-sided account of the ruler resembling an encomium does not entirely convince, even though written in high literary style.

Discussion of Evagrius' *History* would be incomplete without some mention, at least in passing, of the influence of non-classical works on Evagrius' style and language. Procopius, previous ecclesiastical histories, the Bible, and hagiography all made their contributions.

Procopius was an important source of both information and elegant phrases, which were sometimes borrowed without attribution. Still, while Evagrius borrows phrases from Procopius from time to time, in terms of his general style of writing he derives less from authors such as Procopius and his models, Herodotus and Thucydides, than from the ecclesiastical historians he himself was

¹² Photius, *Bibliothèque*, text and trans. René Henry, Collection Byzantine, 8 vols. [to date] (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres", 1959-1978), §29.

continuing. Evagrius' discursive and unstructured narrative style of writing, which introduces new material at times without warning, reflects the non-classical standards of both ecclesiastical historians and Byzantine chroniclers. He often defends his digressions, however, and believes that he is writing in a systematic manner.¹³

Evagrius uses Procopius' *Wars* extensively for much of the material he presents in his fourth book. This material tends to give this part of his *History* a more anecdotal and lively color than most of the remainder of the work, but neither Book IV nor the *History* as a whole extensively reflects Procopius' style of writing except on the level of diction. Despite some lexical influence, however, Evagrius uses Latin terms and late Greek words without apology, unlike Procopius, and he does not always quote Procopius exactly, often summarizing and adding his own rhetorical flourishes.

A secular, not an ecclesiastical historian, Procopius frequently digresses from his main points to give historical backgrounds and geographical descriptions. He also includes material on military tactics and battles, and deliberative speeches balanced between the Byzantine and enemy leaders. Evagrius, on the other hand, inserts only one deliberative speech into his work, and is probably following the lead of Eusebius who did not use speeches or dialogues as a narrative device in his *Ecclesiastical History*. The only occasions on which Evagrius gives background material is when he wishes to make a religious association, to add a moralistic note to his narrative. When Evagrius discusses secular events, he usually does little more than state the bare facts about the outcome, rather than discussing underlying causes or the means of attaining the results. His accounts of battles do not report tactics or strategy, but the practical results and the moral(s) he can draw from them. In fact he alters or expands texts from Procopius in order to provide his own moral emphasis.¹⁴ The link between the Christian faith and Byzantine imperial

¹³ Cf. I,18; IV,29,31 and II,4,10; III,23; IV,7,32.

¹⁴ Cf. Evagrius IV,14 to Procopius, *Wars* III,viii,4; Evagrius IV,16 to Procopius, *Wars* III,ix,5 - x,1,18-21; Evagrius IV,17 to Procopius, *Wars* IV,ix,9; Evagrius IV,27 to Procopius, *Wars* II,xii,30 and xxvi-xxvii.

sovereignty is indissoluble in Evagrius' mind, and this affects his presentation of material, even material borrowed from a secular source.

Other ecclesiastical histories, the Bible, and hagiography all play a part in Evagrius' *History*, but to different degrees. His inclusion of actual documents and almost complete omission of rhetorical speeches place his style closer to that of ecclesiastical historiography than that of secular historians. The documents, letters, and inscriptions in the *History* are cited precisely, for the diction changes discernibly from Evagrius' usual style, and his quotations prove to be quite accurate in the instances where it is possible to check them.¹⁵ Along with his quotation of documents, Evagrius also shares an inclusion of miracles, quotations from the Bible, short biographies of saints and holy men, barbarian conversions, and encomia of good emperors with Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. They too tend to avoid stressing military details and strategy in favor of making a religious point of some kind. Evagrius differs from his three immediate successors (but not from Eusebius) in neglecting dialogue as a stylistic device. Ecclesiastical historiography thus influenced Evagrius' treatment of his subject. It did not, however, affect his diction. He draws on other church historians for information, but rewords it.

Evagrius also uses biblical quotations and allusions in a limited manner. The Bible does not represent an integral part of his style of language. Whenever he quotes it, he states explicitly in almost every case that the phrase is taken from Scripture, but he quotes the Bible only 11 times, the context a discussion about the faith or Church in all but one instance. Biblical language is thus used very selectively in order to make a point. When Evagrius takes ideas from the New Testament, he does not quote the language; his literary style is more tightly structured in its syntax and his vocabulary more sophisticated and archaic.

Hagiography has somewhat more influence on Evagrius' style, but

¹⁵ Procopius quoted letters, but their language was uniform with the remainder of his rhetoric; they most likely did not represent actual documents, but were rather narrative devices as they were in Thucydides.

it is still a limited one. Evagrius' language sometimes becomes less ornate and his style more anecdotal when he relates part of a saint's life which includes popular material (cf. IV, 7; VI, 23). His rare use of dialogue appears in such a context (IV, 7). He still, however, uses complicated language and paradoxical imagery, which are not likely to be derived from his hagiographical sources. Saints' lives are much more discursive and not as compact as the short hagiographical inserts and reports of miracles included in the *History*. Evagrius emphasizes the asceticism and the miracles of holy men and their relics rather than the motifs of upbringing and choice of vocation found in complete saints' lives. He thus offers brief sketches, not complete portraits, of holy men. These are not well integrated into his *History*, but serve rather as moralizing vignettes which represent a contrast to dissolute emperors. No explicit comparisons, however, are drawn.

While Evagrius' treatment of his subject is not purely classical, his diction is fairly close to a conservative and conventional rhetorical tradition. The superficiality of his comprehension of deeper issues, be they economic, religious, or political, parallels that of his characterizations and narrative style. Although he uses the Greek language well as a tool of rhetoric, it must be admitted that his style has less freshness, liveliness, and dramatic interest than would be desirable. Much of his narrative is flat and not smoothly organized. He alternates "set pieces", designed to show off his rhetorical skill, with straight narration which informs without pleasing, for he only reports the facts drily and without much dramatic impact. Frequently the work lacks transitions between its various components and it thus has a choppy quality. Evagrius' training has taught him to compose the separate parts, but not to combine them in a cohesive manner. His ecphrases are vividly presented, however, and within his own tradition of writing Evagrius deserves praise. It was no mean feat to write an ecphrasis which allows the reader to visualize a given scene easily.

Evagrius' *Ecclesiastical History* is not merely a chronicle; it criticizes human events in the light of standards which aid in unifying its discursiveness. His concern is not to entertain his readers (as chroniclers were wont to do), but to offer his own views about

ultimate values. Evagrius' constant theme is the grandeur of Byzantine sovereignty and its union with the Christian faith. He views them as inseparable: the fortunes of the empire and the church in his work rise and fall together throughout the doctrinal controversies about the nature (or natures) of Christ. Evagrius' *History* gradually progresses to the eventual high note of optimism with which it ends. In that it has a happy ending, it may said to have a "comic rhythm".

Remaining close to established literary tradition while writing in a fairly new genre, Evagrius does not really invent so he rarely transcends the limitations imposed by tradition. In this sense he cannot be said to be entirely succesful in a literary sense, but historians must be grateful for the valuable information he preserves for posterity in his *History*.

BYZANTINE BATTLE FLAGS

GEORGE T. DENNIS / WASHINGTON

The warrior who first dipped a rag in the blood of a fallen foe and triumphantly raised it aloft, or who stuck his own bloody tunic on the point of a spear to rally his tribesmen, may be said to have invented the flag. Bits of cloth or other materials could be attached to poles for the same purpose or to identify persons or groups. The Chinese seem to have been among the first to make systematic use of such flags, probably made of silk. Steppe nomads employed dyed horse tails and shiny metal disks; other peoples, including Indians and Persians, used metal, wooden, and cloth symbols. The Byzantine army and navy, however, much as modern armies and navies, regularly used flags made of cloth in assorted sizes, shapes, and colors. Their origin may have been Germanic, as was the word the Byzantines used for them, *bandon*. At any rate, beginning about the end of the sixth century, Byzantine military manuals lay down detailed regulations about the use of flags in training the troops, on the march, and in combat.

The standards of the Roman legions were composed of several symbols on a pole, often topped by a silver or golden eagle. Carried by a reliable, heavily armed soldier, the standard identified the unit and served as a rallying point in battle.¹ Also in use, either with the eagle or by itself, was the *vexillum*, a more or less square piece of cloth, generally purple or red with some gold trim, sometimes bearing the imperial image or other device, carried crosswise on the pole like a small processional banner. Raising it on high was the signal to begin battle or for ships to sail. It also came to be the regular banner for a cavalry detachment, to which it gave its name,

¹ In general see R. Grosse, "Die Fahnen in der römisch-byzantinischen Armee des 4.-10. Jahrhunderts", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 24 (1924), 359-72. Some of the material in this article was presented, along with illustrations in color, at the Byzantine Studies Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, on 25 October 1980.

vexillatio.² Images of the emperors were also borne on special shafts, but apparently not after the fourth century. In the second century non-Roman auxiliaries employed a dragon symbol as the rallying point for their units. Its exact origin is uncertain, perhaps Scythian or even Chinese, but it seems to have been adopted during Trajan's wars against the Dacians, and was widely used in the fourth century. It was made of a metal or wooden dragon head, with mouth open, carried on a pole, with a long, colorful, windsock tail which billowed out behind.³

By the sixth century the eagle and the dragon seem to have disappeared, and the battle symbol or standard regularly in use was called the *bandon*. A Germanic word, it was readily adopted by the Romans to designate the flag, as well as the basic, company sized unit, the *bandon* or *tagma*.⁴ The sources often use the more general term, *σημεῖον* (*signum*), for flag or standard; sometimes the word for pennon or streamer, *φλάμουλον* (*flammula*), is applied to the whole banner. In this article we are concerned with military flags flown in combat by the Byzantines, and not with processional or other purely ceremonial banners, and we are limiting our investigation to flags in use before the coming of the Crusaders.

The lance pennons were generally referred to by the Latin term, *flammula*, a small flame, indicating its color and tapering shape, although it assumed other colors and shapes. The *Strategikon* attributed to Emperor Maurice admits that the pennons give a nice appearance at parades and sieges, but finds that they simply get in the way during combat. For this reason they may be fixed to the lance until about a mile from the enemy, then they should be furled and put

² Ammianus Marcellinus, 24, 6, 5; 27, 10, 9; *et alibi*.

³ Perhaps it was derived from the "Scythian standard", multicolored cloth sewn into a long, tubular shape, giving the impression of a snake, held up by spears. As the bearers raced along, the wind would roar through it and make it swell out like a fearsome beast: *Suidae Lexicon*, ed A. Adler (Leipzig 1935), Σ 321: 4, 351.

⁴ See Procopius, *Bella*, 4, 2, 1; 10, 4; *Suidae Lexicon*, B 94: 1, 452.

in their cases.⁵ Some were double or swallow tailed. The *Strategikon* of Maurice, written about 600 A.D., requires the cavalry to have lances of the Avar type, with leather thongs in the middle and pennons, which were sometimes swallow tailed.⁶ Digenes Akritas was reputed to carry a gold, swallow tailed pennon on his lance.⁷ At a later date, so some manuscript illuminations lead one to believe, triple tailed pennons came unto use.

As with other military developments in the period from the fourth to the sixth centuries, the sources tell us very little about the evolution of the *bandon*. It may have derived from the cloth *vexillum*, or it may quite possibly have come from the dragon symbol. In the *Strategikon* of Maurice the field, the square or rectangular section, of the flag, is called the head, κεφαλή, and the streamers or tails are called the pennons or *flammulae*. One can imagine that the carved dragon head was replaced by a less expensive piece of cloth, perhaps with a dragon head painted or embroidered on it, to which some long streamers were attached. Possibly it was carried as the *vexillum*, crosswise on a pole with the streamers hanging down. At any rate, it soon came to be borne sideways, as are our modern flags, with the streamers flying laterally, which is how the earliest illustrations depict the *bandon*.

The *bandon*, or military flag, consisted of a square or rectangular field with streamers flying from it. The *Strategikon* of Maurice gives more specific details, which are repeated in other military manuals, especially the *Tactical Constitutions* of Leo VI. As with all Byzantine regulations, these may represent the ideal rather than the actual, but they nonetheless, especially when combined with manuscript illuminations such as those of the Madrid Skylitzes, give us a fairly

⁵ Book 2, ch. 1; *Sylloge Tacticorum. Quae olim "inedita Leonis tactica" dicebatur*, ed A. Dain (Paris 1938), 20, 2-5. References to the *Strategikon* are by book and chapter: ed. H. Mihaescu, *Mauricius Arta militara* (Bucharest 1970); new ed. by G. Dennis with German translation by E. Gamillscheg (*Corpus fontium historiae Byzantinae*, 17, ser. Vindobonensis; Vienna 1981); English translation by Dennis in preparation.

⁶ Bk. 1, ch. 2.

⁷ *Digenes Akritas*, 4, 251, although the text is not certain.

accurate picture of Byzantine flags from the late fifth to the twelfth centuries.

A Byzantine army corps (*stratos*) was, at least according to the books, composed of three divisions, each called a *meros*, later a *turma*. Each *meros* was composed of three units, each called a *moira*, later a *droungos*. The *moira* was made up of three companies called variously *bandon*, *arithmos*, or *tagma*. The heads or fields of all of the flags in a *meros* were to be of the same color, whereas each *moira* should have its own color on the streamers.⁸ Other distinctive devices known to the troops should be imposed on the flags' heads. According to the *Strategikon*, then, the troops could easily locate their own *tagma*, *moira*, and *meros*. Size was also important. The author of the *Strategikon* deplores the fact that the flags have become large and unwieldy, and insists that the *bandon* of each *tagma*, and there should be only one, be relatively small, easy to carry, and bear some simple device.⁹ Its principle distinctive feature should be its streamers. It is not clear whether this refers to the size, color, or number of the streamers. The head of the flag should be the color of the *meros*, and the streamers in the color or colors of the *moira*. But the whole flag was to be smaller and probably with fewer streamers. In the manuscript paintings the number of streamers varies from two to eight. Perhaps one can assume that a *bandon* with three, four, or five streamers might be that of a *tagma*, while flags with more streamers designated larger units. The flag of the *moira* was to be larger and of a different design, and the same for that of the *meros*. Exactly what was meant by a different design is not clear. At any rate, the flag of the center *meros* commanded by the lieutenant general was to differ from those of the other merarchs. That of the general who commanded the entire army was to be clearly distinctive, more conspicuous than all the others, and well known to all. In case of a reverse the soldiers were to look to it, rally, and regroup. The same would obviously be true of the imperial banner

⁸ *Strategikon*, 1, ch. 2.

⁹ Bk. 2, ch. 14; *Nicephori Praecepta militaria e codice Mosquensi*, ed. Jo. Kulakovskij, *Mémoires de l'Académie impériale des sciences de St. Petersbourg*, vii^e ser., Cl. hist-philol., 8, 9 (St. Petersburg 1900), 14, 33.

when the emperor was present. The baggage train of each *moira* was also to have its own standard.¹⁰

In each *tagma* an intelligent and courageous soldier was selected to carry the *bandon*, and was called the *bandophoros*. Rufinus the Thracian, for example, the bravest of Belisarius's followers, was chosen to bear his banner.¹¹ The standard bearer was to be stationed in the middle of the battle line next to or immediately behind the commander. An alternate, or else the so-called cape bearer, should be at hand to take over the banner if necessary. The standard bearer should be well protected by armor, including iron gauntlets and a good helmet with chain mail over his face leaving only his eyes uncovered.¹² He was given special orders to maintain his position.¹³

One of the first duties of the merarch before the day of battle was to see that the banners were blessed.¹⁴ Fifteen to twenty of the best men in each *tagma* were detailed to guard the flag.¹⁵ It was, as with other peoples, regarded as a great disgrace to have the flag captured by the enemy. In the event that it was captured, the color guard was to be punished and reduced to the lowest rank in its unit.¹⁶ Flags were, of course, taken by the enemy. In 628 when the Romans captured the Persian imperial palace at Dastagard, they found about three hundred of their own flags (*banda*) which had been captured by the Persians at various times.¹⁷ On the other hand, Persian flags

¹⁰ *Strategikon*, 1, ch. 9; *Nicephori Praecepta*, 14, 26.

¹¹ Procopius, *Bella*, 4, 10, 4.

¹² K. K. Müller, "Ein griechisches Fragment über Kriegswesen", *Festschrift für Ludwig Ulrichs* (Würzburg 1880), 106-138: p. 113, 25-33.

¹³ *Strategikon*, 3, ch. 5.

¹⁴ *Strategikon*, 7, ch. 1; also on ships: *Naumachica*, ed. A. Dain (Paris 1943), I, 24: 5, 4, 3.

¹⁵ *Strategikon*, 2, ch. 15; 7, ch. 19.

¹⁶ *Strategikon*, 2, ch. 8.

¹⁷ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. J. Classen, 2 vols. (Bonn 1839), I, 494, 10-12; Georgius Cedrenus, *Historiarum compendium*, ed. I. Bekker, I (Bonn 1839), 732, 10.

(*banda*), apparently similar to those of the Byzantines, were captured at times and, along with prisoners, sent to Constantinople to be displayed in triumphs.¹⁸ Slavic tribes were reported to have captured or stolen Byzantine flags and other military insignia and used them for purposes of deception.¹⁹

The *bandon* was essential in drilling the *tagma* and, of course, in combat. The first set of orders shouted out by the herald, originally in Latin, insisted that each soldier follow the *bandon* closely, neither going ahead of it or falling behind it. "Silence. Do not fall back. Do not go ahead of the standard. Advance even with the front rank. Keep your eyes on the standard. Follow it with your company, soldier. This is how a brave soldier should act. If you leave the standard you will not be victorious."²⁰ A soldier abandoning the flag in battle was to be executed.²¹

The flag was meant to be a rallying point for the troops. It was also used to convey signals and commands. This was done by holding it high steadily, inclining it to the right or the left, waving it or dipping it.²² This was especially important in naval warfare because of the distance between the ships. Each ship, sea going or riverine, was to have its banner and a designated bearer, although it was considered safer and faster for the commander to give the signals himself.²³ These were conveyed by raising, lowering, and otherwise moving the flags, as well as by changing their shape and color, "as the ancients did".²⁴ To begin combat a red (dark colored) flag or *kamelafkion* was

¹⁸ E.g., Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 1, 277, 14; 402, 16; Cedrenus, 1, 694, 18.

¹⁹ Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, ed. G. Moravcsik (Washington 1967), 29, 39; 30, 44.

²⁰ *Strategikon*, 3, ch. 5.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 2, ch. 8.

²² *Ibid.*, 3, ch. 5; 7, ch. 16; *De administrando imperio*, 49; *Byzantini anonymi de strategia*, ed. H. Köchly and W. Rüstow, *Griechische Kriegsschriftsteller*, 2 (Leipzig 1855), 30,5.

²³ *Naumachica*, ed. Dain, 1, 8; 48.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 6, 44.

raised.²⁵ Two flags could be used by a *tagma* in drills to deceive the enemy, but only the regular one should be flown on the day of battle.²⁶ In setting up camp the flags were used to designate the locations in which the various units were to pitch their tents.²⁷ A battle standard (πολεμικὸν σημεῖον) was flown from the roof of the church of the Theotokos in Blachernai in Constantinople, apparently to signal the approach of hostile forces or to warn them to expect resistance.²⁸

Early in the tenth century, if not before, some flags were surmounted by a gold or silver cross instead of a spear head.²⁹ In the time of Nikephoros Phokas the cross, adorned with gold and precious stones, seems to have fulfilled the same functions as the flags.³⁰ But it is not clear whether these were large processional crosses or crosses attached to, or even simply depicted, on the regular flags. A century later, however, both the Byzantine army and its flags had greatly deteriorated. In Eastern Anatolia in 1070 the military judge, Michael Attaliotes, viewed the survivors of the famous fighting units of the past and remarked: "Their very standards, as it were, silently proclaimed their condition, for they looked filthy, as though discolored by smoke, and those who marched behind them were very few and very poor."³¹

The flags themselves have long since rotted away. Can we

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1, 48; 6, 45.

²⁶ *Strategikon*, 2, ch. 20.

²⁷ *Nicephori Praecepta*, 18, 30; *Byz. anonymi de strategia*, 26, 4.

²⁸ *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, ed. I. Thurn (Berlin 1973; CFHB 5), 34, 78; *Josephii Genesii, Regum libri quattuor*, ed. A. Lesmueller, E. Werner, I. Thurn (Berlin 1978; CFHB 14), 28, 44.

²⁹ Byzantine soldiers captured by the Arabs in 910 carried flags surmounted by crosses: A. A. Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes*. II. *La Dynastie Macédonienne*, ed. Française, H. Grégoire et M. Canard, 1, *Extraits des sources Arabes* (Bruxelles 1950), p. 59.

³⁰ *Leonis diaconi Caloënsis Historiae libri decem*, ed. C. Hase (Bonn 1828), 1, 3, p. 8; 4, 4, p. 61; also Skylitzes, ed. Thurn, p. 270.

³¹ *Michaelis Attaliotae Historia*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn 1853), 103, 16-19.

reconstruct their appearance and see what they looked like? With the help of the foregoing sources and by studying some manuscript illuminations, we can form a reasonably accurate picture of the flags used by the Byzantine military. One group of manuscripts contains illustrations of biblical subjects. Military material, including flags, is found chiefly in miniatures connected with the books of Exodus and Joshua.³² There is some dispute about the dates of these codices, but it seems generally agreed that many of the paintings derive from older models. The banners depicted fit the written descriptions we have, so that they undoubtedly resemble the flags actually in use. The second manuscript source is the illustrated Byzantine historical work, of which the outstanding and nearly unique example is the copy of the chronicle of John Skylitzes now in Madrid, *cod. Matrit. gr. 26 - 2*. This appears to have been copied in Palermo in the second half of the twelfth century from a Byzantine model, probably one taken directly from the imperial library in Constantinople.³³ The historical events, including military actions, narrated in the chronicle are illustrated on almost every page of the volume. Over thirty of these contain flags. There is also the Slavic translation of the Chronicle of Manasses which, although of a later date, was based on an earlier Byzantine model.³⁴ One must be cautious, of course, in drawing conclusions from a study of manuscript illuminations. We cannot claim that a certain banner painted on a manuscript page was actually in use or in use at a specific period. We must be satisfied with

³² Among the manuscripts examined were the *cod. Vat. Palat. gr. 431* (see K. Weitzmann, *The Joshua Roll. A Work of the Macedonian Renaissance* [Princeton 1948]); the octateuch of *cod. Vatoped. 602*, as reproduced in P. Huber, *Image et Message. Miniatures byzantines de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament* (Zurich 1975); the Smyrna octateuch as reproduced in *Miniatures de l'Octateuque Grec de Smyrne* (Leiden 1909); the octateuchs in *cod. Seraglien. 8* and in *codd. Vat. gr. 746* and *747* from photographs in the Dumbarton Oaks collection.

³³ N. G. Wilson, "The Madrid Skylitzes", *Scrittura e civiltà*. 2 (1978), 209-19, with references to older literature. Reproductions of the miniatures, mostly in black and white, in S. Cirac Estopañan, *Skylitzes Matritensis*. 2 vols. (Barcelona 1965); A. Bozhkov, *Miniatjuri ot Madridskija rukopis na Ioan Skilitza* (Sophia 1972); A. Grabar and M. Manoussacas, *L'Illustration du manuscrit de Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Madrid* (Venice 1979).

³⁴ Reproductions in I. Dujčev, *Miniatiurite na Manasievata Letopis* (Sophia 1962).

artistic impressions and hope that they are not too far removed from reality.

Just as other objects in the miniatures, the flags have been conventionalized and simplified. The devices on them, whether crosses, squares, or circles, are not always clear. Often enough the fields are without the devices which must have been on the real flags. The cross is the most common emblem, even being painted on Saracen flags, but there must also have been others. Most of the paintings have only three streamers for banners which undoubtedly had more. In the illustrations the streamers are from two to four meters in length, which is probably fairly accurate. It is sometimes not clear which are unit flags and which are individual lance pennons. The colors are difficult to determine; a very dark blue, for example, may really be a dark green, purple, or black. The colors most commonly used on flags in the miniatures are red, blue, white, green, and yellow; the blue is frequently very dark, and the green is of an olive shade. Purple, black, and brown may also appear, but they do not stand out clearly. Whether these colors were those of the actual banners is another question. When the artists paint horses blue, green, and red, one wonders about their fidelity to reality in other matters.

The flags depicted in the manuscripts are quite plain and simple in design and color with a very limited number of devices, which is how they probably originated. But it is difficult to imagine that the Byzantines would allow anything simple to remain that way for long. Already in the sixth century Maurice had complained that the tagmatic flags had become too large. There may well have been ornamental accretions to the flags, gold thread, rosettes, ribbons, and the like. Simple crosses may have become more complex and elaborate in design. Other devices besides those found in the manuscripts, mostly crosses, must have been in use. One would expect some geometric designs, bird and animal motifs, and other Byzantine decorative components. Perhaps the devices painted on shields in the miniatures might furnish some clues. But until some banners, miraculously intact and unfaded, are found, our picture of Byzantine military flags will have to remain sketchy and imperfect.

Representations of some typical Byzantine flags as depicted in the manuscripts follow.

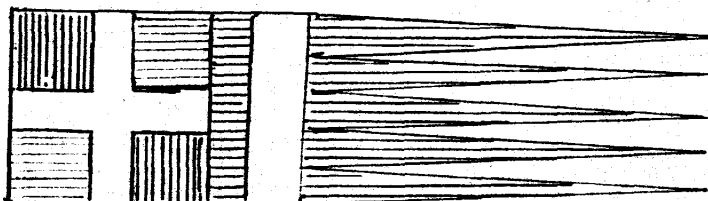
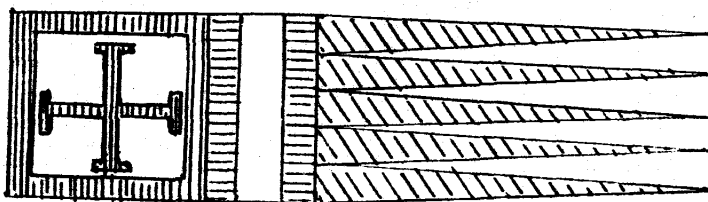
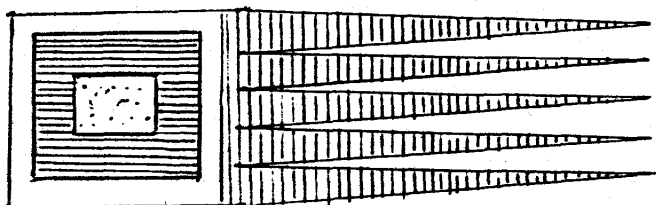


Figure 1

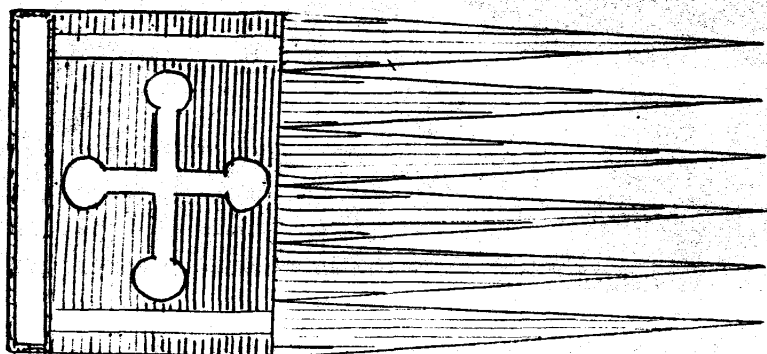
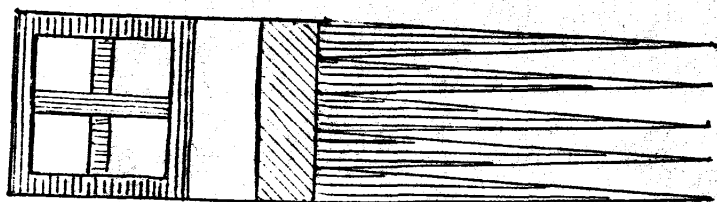
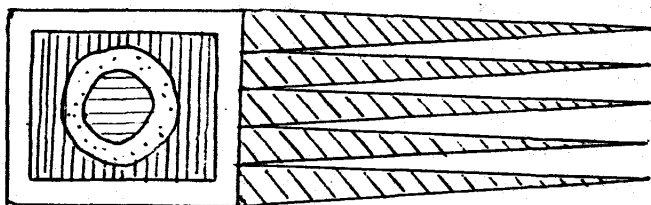


Figure 2

NEO-CHALCEDONIANISM AND THE TRADITION: FROM PATRISTIC TO BYZANTINE THEOLOGY

PATRICK GRAY / HAMILTON, ONTARIO

The conservative defenders of the Council of Chalcedon in the period between Chalcedon and Constantinople II (451-553) represent a significant transition in the understanding of theology - from the conservatism of their predecessors (which defended the traditional faith) they moved to a self-conscious traditionalism which made the tradition itself the central datum of theological reflection, and made theological reflection entirely a matter of interpreting tradition. This new attitude was to be a distinctive mark of the age into which the Church was moving from the age of the Fathers.

The conflict between Cyril and Nestorius which led to the Council of Ephesus in 431 was in large part a conflict between the conservatism of Cyril and the majority and the theological innovation (however biblically based) of Nestorius and the long-suspect School of Antioch before him. It was in reaction against novelty that the Council forbade the production of any new creed beyond that of Nicea.¹ It was enough to maintain the traditional faith when novelty was the challenge. When Eutychianism emerged, however, it proposed an *alternative version* of the traditional faith to that held by the majority of church leaders; this challenge led the majority to begin a process of active reflection on the tradition. It is revealing that the final statement of faith of Chalcedon, produced to meet this challenge, claimed to be neither a πίστις nor a σύμβολον, but rather (on the model, as it thought, of Constantinople I) a διδασκαλία and a ἐξηγήσεια of the traditional faith of Nicea.² In this

*This paper was read at the Sixth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, Oberlin, Ohio, 24 October 1980.

¹ In Canon 7.

² See the text of the Statement of Faith produced by the fifth session of the Council.

way the new mode of doing theology was inaugurated.

In the controversy over Chalcedon which dominated the age in question, the major argument took place between Neo-Chalcedonians and Monophysites, *i.e.* between conservative Cyrillians who accepted Chalcedon and conservative Cyrillians who did not. The former were called upon to defend Chalcedon as having been faithful to the tradition, the latter charged that it had not been faithful. The real issue, then, was the authenticity of Chalcedon's interpretation of the tradition, especially Cyril; hence the focus of the debate was the interpretation of tradition from the very beginning. The biblical evidence, or continuing Christian experience, played a peripheral role at best in these discussions.

The extraordinary proliferation of florilegia, dyophysite or monophysite, in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries is a typical expression of the new attitude.³ The dyophysite florilegium was an essential weapon in the Neo-Chalcedonian arsenal: one was sent by the Emperor Leo I to Timothy Aelurus in 458;⁴ another made up the most extensive section of Nephalius of Alexandria's *Apology* for Chalcedon;⁵ Ephrem of Antioch, Leontius of Jerusalem, and Justinian shared sources in earlier florilegia to produce their own.⁶ A central place in all such florilegia was occupied, naturally enough, by citations from Cyril. In itself, the existence of defence-by-florilegium, as well as the volume of florilegia produced, shows the centrality of the tradition for theological thought in the period.

Equally illustrative is the way these writers argue their case elsewhere in their work. The argument for accepting Chalcedon's "two natures" is not that the biblical witness requires it, but that Cyril and the tradition before him used some such formula or indicated a similar intention. So Nephalius will argue that Cyril used

³ See M. Richard, "Les florilèges diphysites du V^e et du VI^e siècle", *Das Konzil von Chalkedon I* (Würzburg, 1951) pp. 721-748.

⁴ Mansi, *Concilia* VI, col. 349f.

⁵ As may be deduced from Severus' *Orationes ad Nephalius*.

⁶ These inter-relationships are defined by M. Richard in a massive unpublished study of the florilegia among the papers held by M. Geerard. Richard's literary executor.

dyophysite language precisely and intentionally, not “out of condescension” to John of Antioch *et al.* as the Monophysites maintained. He argues, on the other hand, that Cyril’s use of the “one incarnate nature of the Word of God” formula is not precise, and that the word σεσαρχωμένη represents the second nature.⁷ So John the Grammarian will suggest, further, that Cyril’s use of φύσις must be understood in a sense equivalent to ὑπόστασις, an argument which leads eventually to, e.g., Ephrem’s view that Chalcedon’s talk of one πρόσωπον and ὑπόστασις expresses in more theologically precise terms the intended sense of Cyril’s “one nature” formula.⁸ Neo-Chalcedonianism had, of course, to find some way of interpreting the latter favourably, since its association with the name of Athanasius, as well as with that of Cyril, made it to some extent sacrosanct. To accomplish this feat, they used a hermeneutic of intention. Ephrem, for instance, says “The holy Fathers say that one ought to pay heed to the pious thought of the writer.”⁹ Justinian shows how that principle can be applied to the Cyrillian use of “one nature”: “Of course the Father, when he said ‘one incarnate nature of the Word’, intended thereby the word ‘nature’ to have the sense of ‘hypostasis’. In whichever book he uses this expression, he has for the most part made it clear in what follows, where he says ‘son’ or ‘Word’ or ‘only-begotten’, that the reference is not to anything as nature, but rather as hypostasis or prosopon.”¹⁰

By far the most extensive writing from a Neo-Chalcedonian of this period available to us are the *Contra Monophysitas* and *Adversus Nestorianos* of Leontius of Jerusalem.¹¹ The former concerns us

⁷ *Orationes ad Nephaliū*, ed. J. Lebon, CSCO, scriptores syri, series IV, 7, pp. 19-21 and 46, 15 and 24. See the discussion in my *Defense of Chalcedon in the East (451-553)* (Leiden, 1979) p. 109f.

⁸ See the fragment in Eulogius, PG 86², col. 2953A15-B2; see also the account of Ephrem’s position in Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 229.

⁹ Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 229.

¹⁰ Justinian, *Contra Monophysitas*, ed. E. Schwartz, *Drei Dogmatische Schriften Justinians* (Munich, 1939) p. 78.

¹¹ PG 86, coll. 1769A-1901A and 1400A-1768¹B. All subsequent citations are from this volume.

here, and it provides us with a startling display of all the weapons in the Neo-Chalcedonian arsenal. It is made up of the following sections:

- a collection of 63 anti-monophysite aporiae
- a discussion of “intention”
- a dyophysite florilegium
- a “dyophysite” florilegium from Monophysite writers
- selections from a Monophysite florilegium and commentary with Leontius’ critique.

The whole represents an advanced stage in the controversy. This work is a response to a previous Monophysite attack (including aporiae) and follows a lost work in which Leontius criticized his opponent’s aporiae; his are “counter-aporiae”. Because he cites his opponent, and because much can be reconstructed of the opponent’s case from the counter-aporiae, one finds here a particularly revealing insight into a controversy *in processu*.

One notes that approximately 70% of the entire work is explicitly florilegium, commentary on florilegium, or critique of these. One notes, too, that after the aporiae the section on “intention” forms an introduction to the florilegium material. A citation from the opponent opens this section, and it reveals much about Leontius’ concerns: “Why do you, scurrying around us on all sides, make war against our teaching? We know what is the patristic teaching *in so many words* about Christ, *i.e.* one incarnate nature of God the Word, in accordance with holy Athanasius and Cyril, but you speak of a foreign saying which we find set down nowhere expressly by the Fathers, namely two natures, even if undivided, of Christ.”¹² The opponent, that is, maintains a literal traditionalism. Leontius charges that his opponent is able to avoid the conclusion that “in truth it is potentially the same thing to speak of one incarnate nature of God the Word and to speak of a duality of natures in Christ united in one hypostasis” only by refusing to look “in the same writings for the intention laid down by the Fathers”.¹³ Chalcedon was faithful to what the Fathers meant to say. The issue, he believes, is between

¹² coll. 1804D-1805A. The italics are mine.

¹³ col. 1805B.

narrow traditionalism and a more faithful interpretation of tradition's inner meaning. He points out, in defence of the latter position, that Athanasius himself interpreted John 1:14 in novel language when he spoke of "one incarnate nature" *etc.*, and that Nicea interpreted the biblical faith when it introduced the new term *ὁμοούσιος*. He argues, further, that such interpretations are absolutely necessary to protect the traditional faith against heretical misinterpretations and innovations. There can be no question, in all this, that Leontius' own intention is to provide an authentic interpretation of the tradition, and that the question of an adequate hermeneutic is foremost in his mind.

The dyophysite florilegium which follows is not in itself an original piece of work. Neither is it accurate: Richard can point to false ascriptions, doublets, and paraphrases.¹⁴ The intent is clearly stated: Leontius would support his case with "witnesses of our selected Fathers who are eager to recognize natures of the Lord preserved after the union..."¹⁵

More interesting appears to be the "dyophysite" florilegium of Monophysite writers, though it is hardly more accurate. His source is mainly Severus, with one citation from each of Amphilocius of Side and (as he supposes) Timothy Aelurus. Now one might think that Leontius is, as he claims, attempting to show Severus *et al.* as secret dyophysites. That is certainly part of his argument, but flurries of commentary at certain points reveal a deeper purpose. He wants to show that Severus *et al.* admit on occasion that Chalcedonian language *is* traditional and *can* have an orthodox sense. He would like to show that, by their own logic of faithfulness to the tradition, therefore, they ought to be dyophysites, and thus that their followers ought now to accept Leontius' argument from tradition. That is the force of his citation from Amphilocius, in which Amphilocius warns Leo that the pro-Chalcedonians "will have recourse to certain teachers who have spoken of two natures."¹⁶ To the same end he cites Severus as admitting that "two natures in Christ... is said by

¹⁴ In the work referred to in n. 6 above.

¹⁵ col. 1817A.

¹⁶ col. 1841A.

many holy Fathers", and that "certain of the Fathers... used [the expression] blamelessly..."¹⁷ Having painted a glowing picture of Chalcedon defending both the formulae and the intention of the tradition the Monophysites hold dear, Leontius can then ask how the same Severus who admitted a blameless use of dyophysite language could claim that, though "by day and by night I was occupied by the books of the Fathers, I was not yet able to find anyone even up to now of the Fathers who imagines two natures in Christ..."¹⁸ Having questioned Severus' consistency, Leontius can close the section, without comment, with a citation from "Timothy Aelurus" that raises further difficulties:

Cyril... who in various ways articulated the wise proclamation of orthodoxy, appearing inconsistent, is accused of dogmatizing opposite things... But when he became contradictory in his own words, he sowed the seed of the implacable war that now holds sway in the churches... What if the patriarch Severus had not appeared by divine favour? He with his divine writings healed what was unstable and uncertain of Cyril, as if some son who honours his father clothed his begetter's dishonour in seemly garments.¹⁹

The unstated implication is that, if even the Monophysite champions admit an inconsistency of language in the tradition, one *must* look for a principle of interpretation. Severus and his followers do not admit that interpretation is possible, and therefore either deny the difficulties when they find them, or calumniate Cyril for inconsistency. Much better, surely, is Leontius' admission of the difficulty and open respect for the tradition which, at the same time, he admits needs interpretation! So Leontius appears as the champion of Cyril who, as he has said earlier, "clearly testifies to us his harmony with himself and with the truth!"²⁰

It is from this stance as champion of the tradition that Leontius can proceed to the longest of his sections, his critique of a Monophysite

¹⁷ coll. 1841D-1844A.

¹⁸ col. 1845A.

¹⁹ col. 1849A-C.

²⁰ col. 1813C.

florilegium and commentary, with the question: “But what do they say to all these things...who stop their ears with shields, and do not hearken to the wise sayings of the Fathers?”²¹ His opponents, he says, charge him with skipping over the hostile passages in the Fathers. He replies that “Really, the patristic sayings which seem to you to agree with your dogmas, rather recommend ours, when properly examined according to intention, as we were saying from the beginning. For none of the select Fathers is at variance with himself or with his peers in respect of the intention of the faith.”²² One is not surprised, after the discussion of intention, that Leontius makes his case by arguing that the Fathers’ rather indiscriminate use of terms like φύσις, οὐσία, ὑπόστασις and πρόσωπον requires interpretation. One can see that, on occasion, Cyril uses φύσις for ὑπόστασις. To determine which identification (φύσις = ὑπόστασις, or φύσις = οὐσία) is appropriate, one must examine the context, a step he accuses his opponent of refusing to take. For example, the statement taken by both Leontius and his opponent to be from Cyril’s *Second Letter to Succensus*, “To say that two natures existed after the union inseparably is to fight against those who say there is one incarnate nature of the Word”, is shown to have a quite acceptable, even pro-dyophysite, sense by the context, for Cyril goes on to say “The ‘individually’ which was added seems in our judgment to be significative of right doctrine, but [the Nestorians] do not so understand it... For [Nestorius] says that the man is undivided from the Word by equal honour, etc.”²³ Leontius’ conclusion: “Behold then: consider prudently that he knows the expression of right doctrine, but rejects the thought that is harmful...”²⁴ Leontius returns to the point with which he ended the previous section — his opponent’s necessary admission of Cyril’s actual, rather than apparent, inconsistency if he is to be *literally* faithful to the tradition — when he comments: “If he holds [the one nature literally] as you

²¹ col. 1849C.

²² col. 1849C-D.

²³ col. 1853B.

²⁴ *ibid.*

would have it, everything which was said in other places by the Father as concerning the two natures of Christ then was in conflict with these things. The very thing no one says in the spirit of God he is suspected of tolerating."²⁵ Again Leontius is the champion of Cyril' and the rest of the tradition's consistency against the literal exegesis of his opponents who must, perforce, have the tradition genuinely at odds with itself. For our purposes, the most interesting fact to emerge is Leontius' implicit belief that the tradition of "the select Fathers" is never in any way in genuine conflict with itself, so that an exegesis of any text can be produced which will harmonize it absolutely with the rest of the tradition.

In the case of the pseudo-Athanasian text that initiated much of the controversy in the first place — "We confess... not as two natures the one Son, one to be worshipped and one not to be worshipped, but one incarnate nature of God the Word..." — he provides an acceptable interpretation (Athanasius means to say that both natures are to be worshipped, not one) "if really it is by Athanasius".²⁶ On the other hand, he suggests strongly that the text is an Apollinarian forgery, and says that Cyril was probably attracted to it "as to a patristic and not to a heretical text".²⁷ In the case of the texts ascribed to Julius of Rome by the Monophysite, he makes a strong case for their rejection as forgeries (one, he says, "we think lacks neither falsity be reason of pseudepigraphy, nor subversion by reason of invalidity").²⁸ The same kind of charge is laid against texts claimed to be from Gregory Thaumaturgus.²⁹ Thus the process of criticizing his opponent's florilegium leads Leontius to purify the tradition of forgeries, and also to look in the tradition for the central intention behind even the most difficult genuine passages an opponent can produce. Again one notes the attitude: the tradition is without internal inconsistency, and must bear tranquil witness to a

²⁵ coll. 1861D-1864A. The reference is, of course, to 1 Cor. 12:3.

²⁶ col. 1864A-B.

²⁷ coll. 1864B-1865A.

²⁸ col. 1868D.

²⁹ coll. 1873C-1876A.

single orthodox and true faith if properly interpreted. The agenda for theology, in his view, is to perform this proper interpretation.

As for the collection of *aporiae*, one might see them as the sole exception to the exegetical focus of *Contra Monophysitas*. They seem to concern themselves with would-be erudite discussions of the terminology of christology — the paradigm of man, the part and the whole, the nature of “nature”, and so on. When one looks at some internal clues, however, a different perspective on the *aporiae* is gained. As has been pointed out, Leontius’ *aporiae* are counter to earlier *aporiae* addressed, presumably, to him by this same opponent. What needs to be noticed is the fact that, when he later cites his opponent’s florilegium and commentary, the texts he cites include the very terms the *aporiae* raise difficulties about. For example, the complex and seemingly philosophical argumentation about “whole” and “part” and their interrelation seems to find its point of reference in a text, attributed by the opponent to Julius of Rome, which argues for “one nature” on the analogy of a whole being completed out of incomplete parts.³⁰ The same is true of the paradigm of man — the attempt to draw some conclusions about christological union on the basis of its similarity to the union of body and soul in man. In that case the opponent (in his florilegium and commentary) argues that, as man is one nature out of the union of body and soul, so Christ is one nature out of the union of the Word and the flesh.³¹ Here one begins to see clearly how the *aporiae* function for Leontius: they demonstrate the difficulties and absurdities which result from his opponent’s exegesis of the tradition. In this case his point is that the anthropological paradigm cannot be applied univocally to the christological union because the Word pre-exists the flesh of Christ, whereas soul does not pre-exist body; and because there does not result a nature or species of “Christ” as there results human nature, of which there can be other

³⁰ *Aporiae* 4, 19, 38 and 54, coll. 1772A-B, 1780D-1781C, 1792D and 1800A. The text of “Julius” is cited in col. 1865B.

³¹ The relevant section of the Monophysite florilegium and commentary is cited in col. 1860A-B.

exemplars.³² Part of his own exegesis of the admitted use of the paradigm in the fathers is that, as the natures of body and soul persist in the anthropological union, so the human and divine natures persist in the christological union.³³ More importantly, the correct exegesis of the paradigm as used in the tradition is reached when one realizes that “in the case of Christ, the paradigm has been applied to Him not according to the meaning of φύσις, but according to the meaning of ὑπόστασις.”³⁴ This exegesis, seeing the paradigm of man as a paradigm for hypostatic union, resolves all of the aporiae. For Leontius, then, the aporiae are exegetical tools used to discover the correct interpretation of the tradition. As in an earlier discussion, the key is a harmonious interpretation — one that has no genuine aporiae resulting from it. Conversely, they eliminate incorrect (and necessarily unharmonious) interpretations. Again, the focus is entirely on the tradition and its interpretation.

It has been shown, then, in the case of less well-known Neo-Chalcedonians as in the case of Leontius of Jerusalem, that the whole thrust of dogmatic theology in the era after Chalcedon, at least in the majority of the Church, was directed towards that task on which Chalcedon first focused it, the interpretation of the tradition. It is maintained that this thrust distinguished their theology from any previous theology, and inaugurated a new era in the history of theology. It is for students of later Byzantine thought to assess how important and permanent was the transition effected by the Neo-Chalcedonians, though the “scholastic” quality of the dogmatic work of Maximus and John Damascene strongly suggests that it was both important and permanent. Perhaps such scholars will also suggest ways in which the theological energies of Byzantium were re-channelled by the effective termination of dogmatic theology in Neo-Chalcedonianism’s canonization of the tradition.

³² Aporiae 15, 45 and 48, coll. 1777D, 1796C-D and 1797A. Some of the aporetic material is repeated, with additions, in col. 1860C-D.

³³ The positive conclusion from Aporia 15.

³⁴ col. 1860C.

L'IDEOLOGIA ELLENICA DELLA POLIS E I BIZANTINI

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La polis dell'antichità greca, basata sulla proprietà privata fondiaria e sulla schiavitù, improntata da ideali come δημοκρατία, αὐτάρχεια, ἐλευθερία, αὐτονομία, ἰσηγορία, παρρησία e di conseguenza sostenitrice di una propria ideologia, creò le premesse per il massimo splendore all'interno della Grecia nell' "era di Pericle". Come un secolo aureo apparve alle generazioni successive l'epoca in cui Atene assurse ad "Ellade dell'Ellade" (Ἑλλάδος Ἑλλάς) e l'era moderna parlò di un "siècle de Périclès" volendo caratterizzare la coincidenza di un incremento della potenza statale con una prosperità della cultura e dell'arte.

Di fronte ad un tale significato d'entità storico-universale è naturale chiedersi se e in qual guisa la polis classica abbia continuato ad esistere dopo il mutamento dell'antico metodo di produzione sul territorio in cui si era costituita, cioè nello stato greco di Bisanzio. In primo luogo sarà necessario verificare quale posizione abbia occupato la polis nel quadro storico dei Bizantini e quale impiego abbia trovato la sua terminologia; in secondo luogo si dovranno accertare gli effetti esercitati dalla polis sul pensiero politico e sulle forme d'organizzazione sociale.

I.

Se la sofistica nell'Atene classica poteva essere considerata a ragione il maggior movimento educativo della polis, la Seconda o Nuova sofistica dell'era imperiale romana ne assunse in ampia misura il linguaggio e le formule, ma il dominio assolutista non lasciò praticamente spazio ad alcuna attività politica di massa dei liberi cittadini. Gli insegnanti di oratoria, perseguiti estrema eleganza potevano rassegnarsi ad una simile limitazione del loro campo d'attività. Ciò vale pienamente per esempio per Libanio, sofista per eccellenza, che nonostante si fosse fatto tutelatore dei concittadini

oppressi e avesse criticato i danni provocati dall'amministrazione non rivestì mai alcuna carica politica. Era un profondo conoscitore dei classici e i suoi discorsi contribuirono a serbare Atene nel nimbo di un grande passato. Per lui e per gli altri retori tuttavia i personaggi di tale passato rimasero semplici soggetti letterari, temi di declamazioni e componimenti; l'ambiente storico a cui essi appartenevano gli rimase invece estraneo e non pensò minimamente a voler ridar vita alle idee del passato a favore della propria epoca. E ricollegandosi occasionalmente a tali idee, contestò in maniera radicale gli ideali della polis. L'esempio più esauriente lo dà l'orazione 25 Περί δουλείας; essa vuol dimostrare che ogni individuo è schiavo e rimprovera agli Ateniesi e ai democratici, convinti di vivere in pieno possesso della libertà, la relatività dei loro ideali.

Non tacciamo il fatto che nelle esercitazioni oratorie di Libanio, nei proginnasmi e nelle declamazioni, si trovano anche concezioni dissimili. Ma confrontando tali esercitazioni con i discorsi veri e propri, risulta evidente che solo le orazioni posseggono piena validità espressiva per quel che concerne l'intento personale di Libanio. Negli esercizi scolastici di retorica infatti i temi mitologici, i soggetti etologici sono altrettanto rilevanti quanto quelli storici. Ne consegue che Libanio, i cui opuscoli a Bisanzio rientravano nelle letture scolastiche e quindi nella cultura generale, interiormente non aderiva affatto alla forma classica dello stato. Il concetto di stato si personificava per lui nella monarchia, e con certezza non solamente per lui ma anche per i raggruppamenti sociali di cui egli era il portavoce: lo strato più elevato della popolazione cittadina, cioè i curiali e i sostenitori di Giuliano.

Grazie alla sua provata saldezza l'Imperium Romanum era divenuto infatti l'impero per eccellenza, destinato ad abbracciare l'intera ecumene, ed in tutti gli strati della popolazione si andò affermando sempre più la prospettiva monarchica, scevra di qualsiasi comprensione storica sia per la polis greca che per la repubblica romana. Lo dimostrano nel modo più evidente le cronache universali, le quali escludono quasi completamente quei due periodi storici, passando nelle loro narrazioni dalla storia biblico-antico-orientale e persiana all'epoca di Alessandro il Macedone e dei Diadochi. Iniziatore di tale linea è chiaramente

Giovanni Malala che, vissuto all'epoca di Giustiniano, creò il primo influente esempio di cronaca monastica popolare cristiano-bizantina. Dell'Atene del quinto secolo egli nomina il "filosofo-pedagogo" Platone che nel suo "Timaios" avrebbe riconosciuto la dottrina della trinità, e come suoi contemporanei nomina Senofonte, Eschine e Aristotele i quali avrebbero creduto nella metempsicosi. Questo è tutto ciò che i lettori bizantini apprendevano sull'era di Pericle!

Neppure i cronisti posteriori infatti danno informazioni più soddisfacenti. La Cronaca pasquale, compilata poco dopo il 628 e così denominata dalle osservazioni sul ciclo pasquale contenute nell'introduzione, riporta la fama di Erodoto, l'apogeo di Bacchilide e la nascita di Socrate; Pericle viene completamente ignorato come era già avvenuto nel quarto secolo in Eusebio, padre della storia ecclesiastica e autore di una cronaca universale riportata sotto forma di tabelle. Più esteso, pur aderendo alla medesima tradizione è il "Compendio cronologico" del monaco Giorgio Sincello, appellativo che significa fiduciario segreto del patriarca, carica da lui rivestita sotto Tarasio (784-806.) Con l'interpolazione di aneddoti vengono in esso narrate le guerre persiane; ma anche la guerra del Peloponneso è esposta nella stessa forma: sarebbe scoppiata dopo che Pericle ebbe fatto valere una deliberazione dell'assemblea popolare, secondo la quale gli Ateniesi avrebbero dovuto interrompere ogni rapporto di comunanza con i Megarici, avendo costoro offeso Aspasia, moglie di Pericle (sic!); conseguentemente i Megarici avrebbero cercato l'alleanza con Sparta. I più svariati aneddoti vengono inoltre riportati sul soggiorno di Platone in Sicilia, a proposito del quale viene tuttavia giustamente notato che il filosofo avrebbe voluto trasformare la tirannide in una aristocrazia. Nicheforo, successore di Tarasio nella dignità di patriarca, omette completamente la storia greca e passa direttamente dai Persiani ad Alessandro. Nella seconda metà del nono secolo Giorgio Monaco, interessato primariamente all'aspetto ecclesiastico-teologico, fa una lunga enumerazione di contemporanei greci degli Achemenidi, dei quali tuttavia solamente Socrate viene degnato dell'aggiunta di aver dovuto bere la cicuta, non avendo egli osservato le leggi elleniche.

La compilazione storico-universale che giunge fino al 948, ad opera di diversi autori, considera anch'essa rilevante solo la storia

dei re persiani. Sul governo di Artaserse Mnemone (404-358) si nota che “a quel tempo godevano di grande fama il filosofo Platone ed Aristotele”. Gli stessi nomi collegati tra di loro appaiono un secolo dopo in Giorgio Cedreno: “Aristotele è scolaro presso Platone”. Precedentemente erano state narrate le battaglie dei Persiani e significativo è il fatto che il punto di vista è prettamente persiano: “Serse giunse ad Atene ed incendiò la città”. Senza troppi scrupoli d'ordine cronologico vengono riportati: la morte di Socrate “dovuta all'irragione volezza degli Ateniesi” e il terremoto di Achaia - evidentemente la distruzione di Helike e Bura nell'inverno del 373/72. Ancora un secolo dopo Giovanni Zonara compilò la sua “Epitome storico-universale” che sia per quel che concerne la forma linguistica che per la considerazione di fonti antiche e medioantiche eccelle su ogni altra opera di tale genere. Prescindendo da ciò, la sua visione storica non differisce da quella dei suoi predecessori; cioè viene dettagliatamente narrata la storia dei Persiani, mentre non si fa parola della Grecia classica ad essa contemporanea.

Se ciò già succede con il legno verde non ci si può aspettar di più da quello secco: la cronaca in versi di Costantino Manasse (1187), improntata al quadro storico augusteo secondo la concezione di Virgilio, passa dalla guerra di Troia ad Enea e alla storia di Roma senza considerare minimamente l'Ellade. Il fatto che i Bizantini si siano sempre considerati Romani e che abbiano giudicato il loro impero come il proseguimento ininterrotto dell'Imperium Romanum è chiaramente attestato dall'opera ingenua di Manasse, che influi ben oltre i confini di Bisanzio. La linea di sviluppo persiana riprende invece il sopravvento nei contemporanei di Manasse: nel silenziario imperiale Michele Glykas e in Ioel. Per entrambi gli autori il governo di Artaserse Makrocheir costituisce il punto centrale a cui vengono collegate liste di eroi spirituali ellenici. La dipendenza e l'ordine di successione rendono evidente il fatto che nessuno dei due cronisti era in grado di collegare a tali nomi concetti chiari e concreti.

Con i due ultimi autori ora citati la cronaca universale bizantina aveva ormai oltrepassato il suo apogeo ed i testi pervenutici dall'epoca dei Paleologi non sono in grado di illuminare nuovi aspetti oltre a quelli già noti. Nella visione della storia e del mondo, propria degli strati inferiori della popolazione bizantina, che

astruendo dalla bibbia e dalle vite dei Santi era stata influenzata prevalentemente dalle cronache popolari monastiche, non vi era quindi spazio, come si è dimostrato, per la storia delle città-stato dell'Ellade classica. Nel più favorevole dei casi venivano in esse riportati alcuni nomi e concetti; da tali scritti era impossibile acquisire una concezione chiara dell'ideologia e della prassi di uno stato democratico perchè nè gli autori, nè le fonti a cui essi attingevano direttamente possedevano tale concezione. Ma pur se i testi tramandati fossero stati più attendibili e più ricchi, essi non avrebbero incontrato alcuna comprensione presso genti per le quali la monarchia rappresentava l'ordinamento eterno voluto da Dio.

Ciò nonostante ci si può chiedere se per lo meno le persone provviste di una cultura classica, sia che appartenessero alla classe più elevata o al proletariato intellettuale, che a Bisanzio specie negli ultimi secoli non era irrilevante, avessero potuto rifarsi ad informazioni più precise. E un dato di fatto che Bisanzio, fedele bibliotecaria dell'umanità, custodi la letteratura classica antica come patrimonio da salvare per i secoli futuri. Non si può tuttavia ignorare che tale cura non è valsa affatto ai contenuti politici dell'Atene classica. L'interesse culturale primario era indirizzato, non altrimenti che nella tarda antichità, alla forma classica e non al patrimonio spirituale antico e similmente l'attività filologica, risvegliatasi dal nono secolo in poi, riguardava esclusivamente i testi di per sè. Ma neppure nella trattazione di contenuti antichi si prestò la minima attenzione alle istituzioni politiche dell'Ellade classica: ad esempio nella grande enciclopedia fatta compilare dall'imperatore Costantino VII. (912-959), o nei neoplatonici che presero in considerazione esclusivamente gli scritti di Platone rivestenti una certa importanza per le loro speculazioni metafisiche o magico-teurgiche. Tali fatti devono essere tenuti in considerazione volendo interpellare la letteratura bizantina, che potremmo quasi identificare con i nostri lessici.

Nel nono secolo, nella forma di stato altofeudale di Bisanzio, riconsolidatosi dopo l'occupazione slava, l'irruzione araba e i disordini della contesa per l'iconolatria, il patriarca Fozio avviò una rinascita degli studi classici. Egli non solo favorì la rielaborazione filologica dei testi classici ma compì personalmente studi filosofici su Aristotele, e nella sua "Biblioteca" raccolse relazione sui libri

esaminati nella cerchia dei suoi scolari ed amici. In quest'opera figurano 99 autori - deludenti se considerati nel contesto del nostro discorso; la massima parte infatti appartiene all'era imperiale romana o all'epoca bizantina. Da tale compendio sono esclusi gli autori classici Platone, Senofonte e Tucidide; naturalmente essi erano ben familiari a Fozio e i due ultimi citati furono da lui significativamente giudicati come "linea normativa del dialetto attico". L'autore più antico da lui considerato è Erodoto. Egli viene caratterizzato con precisione sia dal punto di vista stilistico che storico-letterario; il contenuto della sua opera viene esposto con concisione e più precisamente, secondo la tipica mentalità bizantina, dall'angolazione visiva della storia persiana; nella "Storia della Persia" di Ctesia, medico personale di Artaserse Mnemone, da Fozio profondamente analizzata e oggi perduta, una tale visione risulta già dal tema stesso. Vengono riportati i nomi dei dieci oratori attici con l'osservazione che Fozio non aveva preso visione di tutti i loro discorsi. Contrariamente gli era ben noto il retore Elio Aristide dell'epoca imperiale; ma da un panegirista dell'ordinamento autoritario romano che cosa si poteva apprendere sull'Ellade classica se non alcuni fatti esposti come esempi retorici? Degno di nota è infine il testo indicato come codice 37, un trattato anonimo in forma di dialogo, chiaramente del periodo altobizantino. Esso cerca la miglior forma di stato che definisce "dominio di giustizia"; la sua costituzione deve essere composta da elementi monarchici, aristocratici e democratici. Fozio non prende posizione, ma aderisce alla critica espressa dall'anonimo nei confronti dello "stato" di Platone.

In summa esaminando Fozio ci si rende conto che l'eruditissimo gerarca, politico e scrittore, a confronto dei compilatori delle cronache universali, per lo più assai ottusi, disponeva di ben più ricco materiale informativo, ma anche che il suo atteggiamento politico di fondo non differiva affatto da quello dei suddetti autori.

Infine prestiamo la nostra attenzione al poligrafo e preumanista tardobizantino Teodoro Metochite, alto funzionario e consigliere imperiale, che contribuì a far affermare le scienze naturali a Bisanzio e in tal senso elesse a propria guida filosofica Aristotele, contrariamente alla corrente del neoplatonismo, dominante alla sua epoca. Le sue "Miscellanea philosophica et historica" riassumono in

forma spigliata i risultati della sua ricerca e del suo pensiero, senza voler ambire ad una compiuta sistematica filosofica o scientifica. Nonostante la monarchia rappresenti per lui sotto ogni aspetto la miglior forma di stato, egli, fedele al suo modello, analizza le differenti costituzioni, dedicando interamente alla democrazia l'esteso capitolo 96. Ma per quanto cerchi di spaziare nella sua visione storica, egli sa scorgere ovunque solamente "l'irragionevole demos". Atene, del cui ordinamento statale tratta il 99esimo capitolo, "tesoriere illustre di ogni cultura e scienza", era da lui considerata una "pura democrazia"; ma anche qui Metochite sa scoprire solo infermità, esagerazione e giustificato declino.

II.

Il materiale riportato dovrebbe aver chiarito a sufficienza il fatto che non si possa assolutamente parlare di una cosciente trasmissione dell'idea della polis a Bisanzio, che anzi ai cittadini dell'impero orientale gli ideali della polis di un governo popolare e di libertà civica restarono concetti incomprensibili ed astratti. La cultura classica che avrebbe potuto propagare la conoscenza di tali concezioni e valori era tuttavia quasi esclusivamente privilegio degli appartenenti alla classe dirigente e possedeva quindi di necessità un orientamento aristocratico. Ma ancorché altri strati della popolazione si famigliarizzassero con tale patrimonio spirituale, esso non era in grado di mobilitarli; la lettura degli autori classici era infatti puramente formale, talmente formale, che persino la chiesa cattolica affermata poté tollerare tale materia educativa. E là dove la Paideia, il cui carattere di fondo aristocratico non deve essere ignorato, al di là dell'insegnamento di artifici retorici, aveva conservato qualcosa del suo vero scopo, indirizzandosi all'individuo, non stava più al servizio dello stato. Tuttavia resta aperta la questione se indirettamente - nelle vecchie o nelle nuove istituzioni - la polis ellenica continuasse a vivere e, in mutate condizioni, senza che i contemporanei ne fossero coscienti, continuasse ad influire su di loro; e tale questione è tanto più pressante se si considera che autorevoli personalità, riferendosi per esempio ai demi altobizantini, parlarono di un vaso in cui continuarono a sussistere le tradizioni di libertà delle città antiche. Bisognerà tener presente due aspetti: in

primo luogo il problema di una tradizione della polis nell'amministrazione delle città bizantine, in secondo luogo la questione delle tradizioni di libertà nell'amministrazione dell'impero.

Indubbio è il fatto che anche dopo il crollo del sistema di stati greci le poleis continuarono ad esistere, anzi, a causa della creazione di territori statali ellenistici, aumentarono persino di numero. Tuttavia non si deve ignorare questa sostanziale differenza e cioè le città ellenistiche, per quanto estesa fosse la loro autonomia amministrativa, non costituivano oltre entità con diritto internazionale, bensì erano annesse all'amministrazione delle nuove monarchie centralizzate di tipo orientale. La terminologia politica tramandata si conservò, ma il contenuto dei suoi concetti fu decisamente alterato. La parola "libertà" non si ricollega più all'indipendenza statale e alla sovranità, tale concetto significa ora semplicemente la mancanza di un'occupazione, il diritto ad una propria costituzione civica (per il quale in precedenza si era usato il termine ben più pregnante di autonomia) e l'esonero da tributi. Gli effetti di tali mutamenti dei rapporti politici sulla coscienza della popolazione cittadina sono vistosamente dimostrati dallo sviluppo della commedia, da Aristofane con le sue opere a carattere decisamente politico, rappresentanti i problemi della comunità della polis, giù fino a Menandro, il quale pone al centro il desiderio individuale di benessere, creduto dipendente dall'intervento della Tyche. Ma è doveroso ricordare anche la filosofia in cui ora, in tutti i sistemi, l'individuo diviene oggetto dichiarato di osservazione e l'etica individuale prende il sopravvento sull'etica sociale. La teoria statale tenne parimente conto di tali mutamenti. La dottrina di una forma mista di organizzazione statale, preparata già in germe dagli uomini di pensiero della Grecia classica, non intendeva affatto propagare il concetto del governo popolare, cercava al contrario di motivare il rifiuto di un ordinamento democratico e di giustificare scientificamente l'illimitato esercizio di potera dei grandi detentori di schiavi. Da essa dipartì una via diretta alla concezione di un quadro storico che presenta la monarchia universale, anche teologicamente ancorata, come la forma ottimale di potere, anzi l'unica possibile; nelle cronache bizantine precedentemente citate abbiamo trovato questa visione del mondo efficacemente trasmessa, essendo essa

adattata ad una vasta cerchia di lettori.

Tenendo presente tale sfondo, ha ben poco significato il fatto che nel mondo degli stati ellenistici e nell'impero romano che ne assunse il retaggio, agli stati greci fu lasciata la loro organizzazione in *demi* e che ginnasio, teatro e tempio divennero simbolo di una ellenicità per lo più culturalmente intesa. Gli statisti dell'imperialismo romano hanno per altro espressamente manifestato il loro disprezzo per la democrazia greca con la sua *libertas immoderata ac licentia concionum* e di conseguenza ovunque essi si imbattono in *polis* a costituzione democratica, in Grecia o in oriente, le ristrutturarono su base timocratica.

Ma neppure tale libertà, che in realtà significava solamente libertà di uno strato plutocratico, restò inalterata. Già con Traiano esistevano plenipotenziari imperiali a sorveglianza dell'amministrazione finanziaria delle città: i *curatores rei publicae*. Nel corso degli anni si verificarono scambi di competenza, le cui cause sono da ricercarsi non per ultimo nella configurazione del sistema liturgico municipale con il *decurionato*, un'istituzione coercitiva contraria a tutti i principi della *polis*, fondamentalmente però non mutò il fatto che, con il sistema politico di Diocleziano, la *polis* cessò definitivamente di esistere come organizzazione autonoma e autoamministrativa. Il *defensor civitatis* (che incontriamo anche come *defensor plebis*), in origine eletto a difesa degli *humiliores* contro i soprusi dei *potentiores*, rimosse gradualmente il *curator rei publicae* dal suo ruolo di suprema autorità civica, ma anche tale carica di dissolse a causa del crescente influsso dei vescovi e nel periodo di Giustiniano il vero e proprio patrono della città era rappresentato dall'episcopo.

I mutamenti politici qui accennati influirono di necessità anche sulla semantica. Naturalmente si continuò ad usare il vocabolo *polis*; ma nel sesto secolo chi lo pronunciava intendeva semplicemente città come agglomerato cittadino o come comune, come unità organizzativa inferiore nel quadro della gerarchia imperiale, non intendeva sicuramente una comunità sovrana in possesso di tutti gli attributi di cui abbiamo parlato all'inizio e con piena certezza non considerava la *polis* sinonimo di "democrazia". Però, come era successo per Roma, divenuta la *urbs* per eccellenza, successe ora per la capitale Costantinopoli che divenne la *polis* per antonomasia,

mentre le altre città vennero comunemente denominate *castrum*.

Ancor più radicale è il mutamento del concetto democrazia. Già Polibio parlò sporadicamente di democrazia in senso peggiorativo (la democrazia come insegna dell'oclocrazia!) e il valore di tale concetto si deteriorò sempre più man mano che si estinse il pensiero della polis. Nel combattivo patriarca Cirillo di Alessandria, nella prima metà del quinto secolo, ed in seguito nella cronografia bizantina, democrazia significa: "giustizia sommaria, assembramento, ribellione, rivoluzione" e solamente nella metaforica cristiana si può ancor parlare di "meravigliosa democrazia degli atomi"; e per altro il linguaggio ecclesiastico fa proprio l'insieme di concetti della polis; libertà è specificamente libertà cristiana, diviene una qualità dei santi, viene riconosciuta in rapporto alla vita eterna e alle proprietà di Dio; politeia significa primariamente "modo di vivere, forma di vita" soprattutto in riferimento alla prassi ascetica; polites è il cristiano in qualità di cittadino della patria celesta e l'espressione "registrare nel ruolo di cittadino" viene usata metaforicamente per "battezzare". Il considerevole mutamento di significato subito dalla parola democrazia si rispecchia nella trasformazione del senso di *demos*, cosa altrimenti inspiegabile. *Demos* non definiva più l'intera comunità di cittadini liberi, bensì il partito circense - prevalentemente dei Blu e dei Verdi - delle grandi città dell'Impero romano d'oriente. Tali partiti circensi erano territorialmente articolati, avevano mansione di milizia cittadina ed esercitavano ulteriori funzioni pubbliche.

Con l'accertamento di tali fatti non si mette minimamente in dubbio l'importanza politica rivestita dai *demi* sul piano locale e soprattutto nella capitale Costantinopoli, la cui popolazione per diritto consuetudinario in periodi di crisi si elevava, nelle sue organizzazioni, a rappresentante e mandataria con piena libertà d'azione dell'intera popolazione dell'impero. Di fronte all'assolutismo imperiale tuttavia nè il *demos* - che usato al singolare spesso stava ad indicare in senso collettivo i due *demi* dei Verdi e dei Blu - erano in grado di farsi valere come partner equiparati; questi si limitavano per lo più ad inoltrare proposte e petizioni. Ma, come il senato metteva in gioco tutte le sue possibilità in un periodo di indebolimento del potere imperiale, in egual guisa reagivano anche i *demi*, in seno ai quali gli strati inferiori della popolazione

costituivano la massa del partito, mentre la sua direzione era affidata all'alta aristocrazia e ai funzionali nobili presso i Blu e ai grandi commercianti e ai possessori di ergasteri presso i Verdi. Le azioni dei demi divennero quindi una valvola attraverso la quale potevano manifestarsi le reali necessità delle masse popolari, necessità che tuttavia venivano troppo spesso manipolate nell'interesse della classe dirigente. Comunque tale istituzione costituiva per la potenza imperiale una forza da non sottovalutare e che saggiamente fu calcolata. Per quanto l'istituzione dei demi avesse creato una certa libertà d'azione politica, risvegliando di conseguenza una certa coscienza politica - in realtà l'ippodromo esercitò l'effetto contrario del circo romano, espletando su un piano diverso la funzione del dramma attico - per quanto essa avesse risvegliato illusioni di libertà civica e di autonomia comunale, tuttavia essa non fu mai e in nessun luogo all'insegna della polis classica e della sua caratteristica forma di governo democratico. Le fonti di quel passato, come abbiamo evidenziato precedentemente, erano tuttavia ben note agli ideologi dei demi, e dovremmo quindi presumere che essi avrebbero potuto servirsi di tale arsenale spirituale, se lo avessero reputato utile ai loro fini politici.

Ma successe proprio il contrario. Persino il vocabolo polis = città subisce sempre maggiori delimitazioni nel suo impiego: esso definisce la capitale e le città greche in partibus infidelium, cioè al di fuori del territorio imperiale, mentre a Bisanzio stessa si afferma il termine castrum. Precedentemente era andato perduto anche il nome di Elleno, che, proprio per la coscienza del cittadino della polis, aveva rivestito la massima importanza; Elleni venivano definiti ora i pagani, mentre i Bizantini si sentivano Romani: volevano essere cittadini e legittimi rappresentanti dell'impero mondiale romano, mentre l'Ellade classica scomparve dal loro quadro storico e solamente con il decadimento del feudalesimo bizantino l'antico nome di Elleno riacquistò dignità, poté persino significare un programma. La monarchia universale romanocristiana divenne l'ordine mondiale per eccellenza e quando i demi cercarono di assoggettare con i mezzi a loro disposizione monarchia e senato, il suo equilibrio sembrò divenire precario. Tale processo veniva definito "democrazia" anche dai cronisti popolari che forgiavano la coscienza delle masse! Di conseguenza simili azioni "demo-

cratiche" furono considerate da tali autori come delitti di stato e Malala trova perfettamente convenevole il fatto che il rappresentante dell'autorità in un caso simile ricorse alla violenza e "ridusse in suo potere la 'democrazia' bizantina". Tempi nuovi e una nuova società spogliarono anche il concetto democrazia, come successe per il termine Elleno, del suo valore e della sua dignità, diffamandolo ed esecrandolo nel vero senso della parola. I demi bizantini, per quanto furono in grado di dar espressione al volere del popolo, non poterono quindi servirsi per le loro azioni di lotta di classe di tali concetti centrali, nè della globale ideologia della polis.

III.

E noto che già al tempo dei Commeni le città riacquistarono importanza grazie allo sviluppo del commercio e dell'artigianato. Considerate globalmente però le città bizantine non furono in grado di apportare mutamenti nel sistema politico; infatti mentre in occidente si andavano formando comuni ad amministrazione autonoma, in lotta con i signori feudali urbani, nelle città dell'impero orientale mantennero il sopravvento i feudatari, sufficientemente forti per soffocare movimenti democratici. La denominazione πόλις si riaffermò nei confronti di χάστος e non mancarono tentativi di mettere nuovamente in pratica i diritti dei partiti circensi altobizantini. Ma tale presa di coscienza per le condizioni altobizantine non incluse affatto una presa di coscienza per la polis classica.

I moti popolari bizantini culminarono, tra il 1343 e il 1349, nella sommossa di Tessalonica, capeggiata dal raggruppamento radicale degli zeloti. Nel nostro contesto è di sommo interesse soprattutto l'ideologia dei rivoluzionari. Alcuni studiosi richiamarono l'attenzione sulle presunte tradizioni democratiche, che a Bisanzio avrebbero continuato a sussistere accanto all'autocrazia e al despotismo e credettero di poter ricollegare tali tradizioni alle antiche città-stato. Ma abbiamo già avuto occasione di mettere in dubbio un simile presunto tradizionalismo dal punto di vista dell'accertamento filologico delle fonti e vorremmo associare la richiesta storiografica "di non citare singoli testi, bensì di considerarli globalmente, nel loro insieme". Sotto tali premesse risulta però che i demi altobizantini basavano su ben altri

presupposti rispetto al movimento tardobizantino degli zeloti; le lotte di classe della storia bizantina non derivano dal perdurante effetto di un presunto democratismo, bensì dai momentanei concreti rapporti di classe. Di fatto si sarebbe potuto senz'altro supporre che i capi degli zeloti, evidentemente in possesso di un programma socialpolitico, per rafforzare la loro posizione ideologica si fossero serviti "della lingua, delle passioni ed illusioni" delle "austere tradizioni classiche". Che ciò non avvenne lo dimostra chiaramente la testimonianza dell'eruditissimo storico Nicheforo Gregora, che sottolineò espressamente l'originalità della repubblica zelota, contrapponendola alle altre forme statali conosciute: non sarebbe stata un'aristocrazia come quella fondata da Licurgo nell'antica Sparta, nè una democrazia sul genere di quella ateniese di Cleistene, ma neppure paragonabile allo stato di Zaleuco a Locri nell'Italia settentrionale, nè di Caronda a Catania, in Sicilia e tanto meno alle costituzioni miste posteriori di Cipro e dell'antica Roma, nè di altre località; si tratterebbe piuttosto di una inconsueta forma di oclocrazia, determinata più che altro dal caso. Più che naturale è il fatto che l'aristocratico Gregora considerasse con riserva gli zeloti; ma tenendo presente appunto il suo distanziamento, li avrebbe sicuramente condannati, se costoro nelle loro azioni si fossero ricollegati alla greicità classica.

Il fatto che si considerò nuovamente con attenzione anche i suoi contenuti politici, all'insegna di un rafforzato atticismo e di una erudizione polistorica, caratteristica importante della letteratura tardobizantina, viene testimoniato oltre che da Gregora anche dal filologo Tommaso Magistro. Attingendo al pensiero di Isocrate, egli trattò l'argomento dei doveri del sovrano e compose un secondo discorso sullo stato. Pur dovendo ammettere che il trattato dà rilievo alla dipendenza del reggente dalla massa dei cittadini, esso tuttavia accetta acriticamente la tradizionale concezione monarchica del mondo: cerca di placare le lotte di classe con l'ammonimento ad un'intesa: "Pur articolando l'intero stato in aristocrazia e plebe, non consideriamo giusto che prendan piede malevolenza ed arroganza degli uni nei confronti degli altri, entrambe le parti dovrebbero piuttosto considerarsi con adeguata benevolenza". In tal senso l'autore tende ad orientare esclusivamente verso uno sviluppo delle qualità morali dell'individuo, la cui collocazione nella monarchia

universale gli appare più che naturale. Rilevante a tale riguardo è l'affermazione secondo la quale Atene, dal settimo secolo ridotta a piccola città periferica, viene esaltata nell'importanza da essa rivestita per l'intera Grecia, anzi per l'intera umanità. La concretizzazione di tale pensiero delude però le speranze che si vorrebbe collegare ad esso; infatti egli non accenna affatto alle conquiste politiche del quinto secolo, ma si limita a menzionare il senso morale degli Ateniesi, il loro senso religioso, la loro probità ecc. Sarebbe perciò erroneo vedere nell'esortazione finale alla calocagazia, indirizzata ai lettori, un avvicinamento all'antichità pagana.

Resta tuttavia inconfutabile il fatto che anche la grande dimestichezza con gli aspetti formali dell'antica letteratura significò un passo decisivo verso la preparazione di quel grande progressivo rivolgimento che si basò affatto sui manoscritti "salvati dalla rovina di Bisanzio". La Bisanzio in decadenza non solo preparò il terreno alla renaissance, ma ne ebbe essa stessa parte. Già nell'undicesimo secolo Michele Psello (1018-1079 o 1097) aveva riscoperto Platone - non il politico, tuttavia il filosofo e l'uomo di scienza - riimpossessandosi attraverso di lui delle conquiste dell'antico pensiero: razionalismo, accertamento dei fatti, ricerca delle cause, rifiuto di ogni credenza cieca, basata sull'autorità o sull'analogia. Tale linea culminò in Giorgio Gemisto Pletone (metà del quattordicesimo secolo - 1452) che a ragione è stato definito filosofo politico. Nel despotato di Mistra credette di scorgere la possibilità di erigere uno stato ideale, ispirato al pensiero platonico, che avrebbe condotto l'ellenicità a nuova fioritura. Negli scritti di Pletone infatti si parla a ragion veduta di Elleni e non più di Romani. Nella tradizione degli Elleni vengono però considerati in primo luogo gli Spartani. Ciò deriva dal fatto che i piani di riforma dell'umanista utopista Pletone avrebbero dovuto realizzarsi su suolo un tempo spartano; ma tale inclinazione trova la sua causa primaria nel fatto di per sè. Nel libro di Pletone sulle leggi l'antico stato spartano viene preso esplicitamente a modello, naturalmente purgato dell'eccessivo rigore e corredato della sostanza centrale della dottrina statale di Platone. In altra occasione - in un discorso al despota Teodoro II. - la monarchia viene definita in tal senso la migliore delle tre forme di stato, sempre che venga sorretta da ottimi consiglieri e da valide

leggi, fattori considerati forze determinanti; nei riguardi dell'imperatore Manuele II. si sottolinea espressamente la responsabilità del regnante. In tali concezioni aristocratiche non restò quindi spazio per la democrazia ateniese - e tanto meno per chiesa e clero, cosicché il patriarca Gennadio, alcuni anni dopo la morte di Pletone, ordinò di bruciare le sua opera sulle leggi, permettendo di conservarne solo alcuni stralci a scopo dimostrativo.

Con Giorgio Gemisto Pletone si conclude la storia del pensiero politico a Bisanzio, nel 1453 la capitale del grande potente impero di un tempo cadde in mano del conquistatore turco. Lo stato che in tal modo cessò di esistere come potenza politica fu tutt'altro che uno stato ideale, sinonimo di fasto e ricchezza, potente all'esterno ed concorde all'interno; negli oltre 1000 anni d'esistenza fu caratterizzato dal declino definitivo degli antichi metodi produttivi e dalla formazione ed in seguito il pieno sviluppo dell'ordinamento feudale, nella cui fase conclusiva si poterono già avvisare i primi indizi del metodo di produzione capitalista. Accanite lotte di classe, nelle quali le masse popolari rivendicarono i loro diritti e le loro libertà contro lo sfruttamento e l'oppressione, divennero la spinta motrice di tale sviluppo. Rientra nelle caratteristiche dello stato bizantino che esso, come "bibliotecario dell'umanità" abbia custodito fedelmente le conquiste spirituali dell'antica Grecia. La memoria della libertà e della democrazia della polis avrebbe senz'altro potuto divenire un'arma efficace in quelle lotte. I fatti qui esposti dovrebbero aver chiaramente dimostrato l'illusorietà di tale aspettativa: in conseguenza del pensiero imperiale tramandato e della visione storica da esso derivante mancava alla vasta massa dei Bizantini, ai dominatori come ai dominati, il senso di un'entità statale ad amministrazione e governo autonomi - e sia pure limitati al suo strato più elevato. Gli eruditi, pur conoscendo i testi classici, non poterono nè vollero rendere utilizzabili per la propria epoca i loro contenuti politici. Tuttavia li curarono e tramandarono con accorta scrupolosità, cosicché essi restarono armi efficaci, di cui in seguito la borghesia seppe ben servirsi nella lotta per la sua emancipazione.

Il testo si ispira ad un saggio apparso nella raccolta edita da Elisabeth Charlotte Welskopf "Hellenische Poleis - Krise - Wandlung - Wirkung", volume II., Berlino 1974, p. 1639 seg. Per dati più specifici si rimanda a tale saggio.

TWO STUDIES IN THE CONTINUITY OF LATE ROMAN AND BYZANTINE MILITARY INSTITUTIONS*

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This is not the appropriate occasion to offer a general review of the extensive scholarly literature on the subject of the origins and character of the Byzantine themes, probably the most obscure, the most controversial, and the most important issue for twentieth-century Byzantine historians.¹ The recent penetrating investigations by Haldon and Lilie decisively support and confirm the earlier arguments of Karayannopoulos, Lemerle, and Pertusi, to name some of the most eminent scholars, who rejected any theory of a comprehensive creation of the themes by Heraclius in the 620's, especially as a conscious and sweeping social, political, and military reform. Instead, there is growing evidence for the gradual emergence of Middle Byzantine institutions from those of the Late Roman (or Early Byzantine) period. This does not mean that such a

*Sections of this article were read and discussed at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, Dallas, 1977, and in a public lecture at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 10 December 1980. I wish to acknowledge my thanks to various scholars who have read earlier versions of sections of this paper, including John Teall, Averil Cameron, Robert Edbrooke, Irfan Shahid, and Arnaldo Momigliano, although this in no way implies that they agree with all of the conclusions. I wish to acknowledge with thanks the reference to *Parastaseis*⁴², which was called to my attention by Dr. Judith Herrin and the research team of Averil and Alan Cameron.

¹ For a review of earlier literature, see: John F. Haldon, *Recruitment and Conscription in the Byzantine Army c. 550-950. A Study on the Origins of the Stratiotika Ktemata* (Sitzungsberichte, "Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Bd. 357, 1979) 20-40; also R. Lilie, *Die byzantinische Reaktion auf die Ausbreitung der Araber* (Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia, 22, Munich 1977) 287-360.

gradual process always operated at an even pace. Elements of the Late Roman civilian and provincial structure survived into the early eighth century, as H. Gelzer correctly observed long ago.² Late Roman military nomenclature survived well into the seventh century. One contemporary source, for example, shows that the names of some very old Roman military units were restored in Byzantine Palestine after the Byzantines recovered Palestine from the Persians.³ If major changes in the Byzantine army had been made elsewhere, such as the creation of the themes, it seems that they would have been instituted in Palestine after its recovery from the Persians; however there is no such indication. Indeed, the scraps of references are beginning to point to a conclusion that some earlier Byzantinists had hypothesized without knowledge of some Arabic texts: that the Arab invasions and conquest of Palestine and Syria and Mesopotamia provided the catalyst that accelerated what had been a gradual development, almost imperceptible, of Late Roman military institutions into Byzantine ones. The *Futûḥ al-Shâm* ("The Conquest of Syria") by al-Azdî al-Baṣrî states that in the face of impending Arab invasions Heraclius appointed commanders from his army over certain major cities of Syria; this text deserves more study but appears to describe the creation of emergency military

² Haldon, *Recruitment and Conscription*, and R. Lilie, *Die byzantinische Reaktion*. The fundamental earlier studies: J. Karayannopoulos, *Die Entstehung der byzantinischen Themenordnung* (Munich 1959); P. Lemerle, "Esquisse pour une histoire agraire de Byzance", *Revue Historique* 219 (1958) 32-74; Lemerle, "Quelques remarques sur le règne d'Héraclius", *Studi Medievali* 3, ser. 1 (1960) 347-361; A. Pertusi, "La formation des thèmes byzantins", *Berichte zum XI. Inter. Byzantinisten-Kongress* (Munich 1958) Pt. 1: 1-40; Pertusi, "Nuova ipotesi sull'origine dei 'temi' bizantini", *Aevum* 28 (1954) 126-150, and Pertusi, "La questione delle origine dei temi", in his critical edition and commentary, Costantino Porfirogenito, *De thematibus* (Vatican City 1952) 103-111. See also: W.E. Kaegi, Jr. "Some Reconsiderations on the Themes", *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 16 (1967) 39-53. On the slowness of change: H. Gelzer, *Die Genesis der byzantinischen Themenverfassung* (Leipzig 1899, r.p. Amsterdam 1966) 8-72.

³ W.E. Kaegi, Jr., "Notes on Hagiographic Sources for Some Institutional Changes and Continuities in the Seventh Century", *Byzantina* 7 (1975) 60-70.

government in Syria in the middle of the 630's.⁴ This process may have been extended when the shattered remnants of Byzantine armies withdrew into Asia Minor. The *Futūḥ al-Buldān* by al-Baladhuri indicates that a military unit called "Armeniacus" under the command of a patricius was in existence in the 640's although it may not technically have been called a theme.⁵ The Arabs gave Amorion much attention in 644 and 646 probably because it had already become the command post for the remains of the Orientales (the troops who served under the Magister Militum per Orientem) that were in the process of becoming the Anatolic Theme.⁶ The overall trend of evidence is vindicating the arguments that Pertusi made in 1952, 1954, and 1958, that the themes took their essential form in the wake of the retreat and regrouping of the Byzantine armies, especially the orientales, that withdrew before the victorious Arabs.⁷ Many details require clarification and some of them may not receive clarification for a long time. It is still uncertain when the words θέμα and θέματα began to be used for Byzantine armies. Mature themes do not appear until the eighth century, that is, thematic structures do not appear to have included civilian responsibilities and the old Late Roman civilian administrative structure does not appear to have disappeared until that advanced date. Yet the process of transformation of Late Roman military units into Byzantine themes quickened in the course of and immediately following the evacuation of Byzantine Syria and Palestine.⁸

Those who believe that there was a gradual development of the themes have an obligation to show how that process worked. This paper investigates two institutional continuities between the sixth and early seventh century.

⁴ Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Azdī al-Baṣrī, *Tārīkh Futūḥ al-Shām* (ed. 'Abd al-Muhim, 'Abd Allāh 'Āmir, Cairo 1970) 28, 31.

⁵ W.E. Kaegi, Jr. "Al-Baladhuri and the Armeniak Theme", *Byzantion* 38 (1968) 273-277.

⁶ W.E. Kaegi, Jr. "The First Arab Expedition Against Amorion", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 3 (1977) 19-22.

⁷ Pertusi, "Nuova ipotesi" 126-150; Pertusi, "La questione delle origine dei temi" 111; Pertusi, "La formation" 30-36.

⁸ See important conclusions of W. Seibt in his review of G. Zacos, A. Vegler, *Byzantine Lead Seals in: Byzantinoslavica* 36 (1975) 209.

A neglected passage — called to my attention by Dr. Judith Herrin and a team of investigators under Professor Averil Cameron — in the early eighth - or late seventh-century *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai* indicates that the corps of Excubitors continued to have a role in scrutinizing military fitness in the reign of Heraclius, a role that they or at least some of their officers had already exercised in the reign of Justinian I.

The text of *Parastaseis* 42 describes the end of the huge brazen ox-head that had once decorated the Forum of the Ox (*Bous, Forum Bovis*) in the region of Constantinople that is now Aksaray. The ox-head had been brought to Constantinople from Pergamum, probably in the reign of Theodosius I.⁹ The author of the *Parastaseis* explains: "And after the same Phocas was burned by Heraclius the ox was melted in the treasury of the Watch and passed over to Pontos because of a recruitment of an army (the Watch was in Pontos) *twenty-four *stathma* ["weights"] of coin were melted for it. What is here still preserved until today for viewers is cast in very sad little

⁹ *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*, 42, ed. T. Preger, in *Scriptores Originum Constantinopolitanarum* (Leipzig 1901) 1: 49: on the removal of the ox-head from Pergamum, George Cedrenus, *Hist.* (ed. I. Bekker, Bonn 1838) 1: 566. On Forum Bovis, W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* (Tübingen 1977) 253-254. See J. Herrin, "The Date and Purpose of the 'Curt Historical Notes' (*Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*)", *Abstracts, Sixth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference* (1980) 44-45. Cf., also, on the Forum Bovis, *Patria Konstantinopoleos* 53 in: *Scriptores Originum Constantinopolitarum* (2: 180 Preger), paraphrasing important information in the *Parastaseis*, including the minting of bronze coinage (*folles*) from the ox-head. Even though a few coins "busts" survived from the meltdown that the author of the *Parastaseis* could still identify at the beginning of the eighth century, I am informed by Professor Phillip Grierson that no such pieces are known to exist today.

images [busts].”¹⁰

This passage describes the imperial Watch (τὸ σκουλκάτον), or some members of it, melting down the brazen ox-head of the Forum of the Ox in Constantinople and transferring it to Pontos because the Watch was there for the purpose of raising an army. This recruitment was probably a general one, that is, not intended to recruit new soldiers specifically for the unit of the Excubitors or Watch, but for broader military purposes. The conclusion that the recruitment was a general one derives from reading Procopius of Caesarea’s *Anecdota*, in which Procopius critically describes how in the reign of Justinian,

Later on also some of the Palace Guards were sent out through the whole Roman Empire, and ostensibly they were in search of any among the armies who were quite unsuitable for active service; and they dared to strip the belts from some of these as being unfit or too old, and these thereafter had to beg their bread from the pious in the public square of the market-place, so that they became a constant cause for tears and lamentation on the part of all who met them; and from the rest they exacted great sums of money, to the end that they might not suffer the same fate...¹¹

These guards almost certainly were, as Stein observed, *scribiones*, that is, officers, of the corps of Excubitors.¹² Procopius is not describing their actions as directly involving recruiting here, but the scrutinization of the fitness of soldiers is an integral aspect of the process of recruitment. It was officers of the Excubitors who were

¹⁰ *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*, 42 (Preger 1: 49): καὶ μετὰ τὸ καυθῆναι τὸν αὐτὸν Φωκᾶν ὑπὸ Ἡρακλείου χωνευθῆναι τὸν βοῦν εἰς σκουλκαταμεῖον καὶ εἰς τὸν Πόντον περάσαι ἔνεκεν στρατολογίας | (ἦν δὲ τὸ σκουλκάτον ἐν τῷ Πόντῳ) † σταθμῶν τοῦ ἀργυρίου καὶ διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸ χυτὸν. “Ὅπερ καὶ ἐνταῦθα σώζεται ἕως τῆς σήμερον τοῖς ὀρῶσιν εἰς λαίμια χωνευτὰ σκυθρωπὰ πάννυ. See the comments of Preger on p. 49, n. 11 (significat effigiem collo tenus) and Dindorf, s.v. Λαίμιον, *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (Paris 1842-1846) 5: 42 (imaguncula) for the meaning of λαίμια. Note reference to Heraclius’ recruiting in a plausible source: Σύνοψις Χρονική, ed. C. Sathas (Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη, VII, Venice 1894) 108: ἐξῆλθε διὰ θαλάσσης κατὰ Περσῶν, καὶ δι’ ἑξ χρόνων στρατολογήσας.

¹¹ Procopius, *Anecdota* 24.8

¹² Ernest Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* (Paris 1949) 2: 445-446, esp. n. 1, 446: “me paraissent être des scribons”.

responsible for determining fitness. Reinforcing this passage from Procopius is one from the correspondence of Pope Gregory I in 592, who instructs Petrus, subdiaconus of Sicily, that “Venientibus scribonibus, qui sicut audio iam illic tyrones colligunt, loci servatori tuo deputa, ut parum aliquid exenium offerant, quatenus eos sibi placabiles reddant.”¹³ This passage does not prove that there was any general conscription (Gregory’s order to give the *scribones* a little gift may suggest that he wished the *scribones* to avoid conscripting on ecclesiastical estates, but their recruiting may not have been compulsory conscription; the text is not conclusive on this controversial question). It does show officers of the Excubitors recruiting soldiers in a province exactly three decades before the instance of Excubitors recruiting in the Pontus, which the *Parastaseis* mentions. In both instances their function is not to examine or raise manpower for the corps of Excubitors itself, the implication is that this is broader in scope, scrutiny of soldiers for the larger army. Another letter of Gregory describes a *scribon* distributing pay to soldiers in Rome. The description of the ceremony of creating *scribones* — at the door of the Excubitors in the imperial palace in the presence of their domestic — shows that the *scribones* were officers of the Excubitors: the *De Cerimoniis* is decisive.¹⁴

The author of the *Parastaseis* provides no explicit date for the melting down of the brazen ox head, except the statement that it took place after the execution of Phocas, which means after 5 October 610. It is true that Emperor Heraclius may have sought to recruit soldiers for any army at any time after his accession. Yet the revolt of Comentiolus, brother of Phocas, would have denied Heraclius’

¹³ Gregorii I. *Registrum Epistolarum* 2. 38 (ed. P. Ewald, L.M. Hartmann, MGH, Epp., Berlin 1891) 1: 137.

¹⁴ Gregorii I, *Ep.* 5. 30 (310-311 Ewald-Hartmann), in a letter to Emperor Maurice. On the ceremony for creating a *scribon* at the door of the Excubitors, in the presence of the Domestic of the Excubitors: Constantine VII, *De Cerimoniis* 1.32 (ed. trans. A. Vogt, r.p. Paris 1967, 1: 121) and the commentary of Vogt, 2: 151, “Comme il est naturel, les scribones relevant du domestique des Excubites. étaient promus dans leur quartier propre”. Important is the discussion of A.H.M. Jones, *Later Roman Empire* 658-659, and esp. n. 118, p. 203 of the notes, who believes that the *scribones* were officers of the Excubitors.

Excubitors access to Pontos immediately after the execution of Phocas. The most likely date for the recruitment or raising of an army in Pontos was sometime in 622 or immediately thereafter. Before leaving Constantinople on 5 April 622 for the east in order to turn back the Persian invaders of Asia Minor, Heraclius, according to the *Chronographia* of Theophanes, “Taking money from the holy houses [presumably churches and monasteries] in loan, being in want he even took the candelabra of the Great Church and other service vessels, minting very many nomismata and milliaresia.”¹⁵ It is very likely that the brazen ox-head, associated in Christian tradition with the burning of Christian martyrs in its furnace (including St. Antipas as well as Christians in the reign of Julian the Apostate), was a target for contribution to the war effort against the non-believing Persians. It surely would have been difficult to justify sparing the ox-head with its pagan and explicitly anti-Christian associations — whatever the truth of such traditions — when ecclesiastical establishments, including the Great Church, were yielding up some of their most sacred treasures to finance the struggle against the Persians. It is true that the ox-head was merely bronze, not precious metal, but its meltdown did produce twenty-four *stathma* worth of coin for its bronze. The ox-head did adorn a famous forum in Constantinople but the empire’s financial circumstances were so strained that the melting of the ox-head would have been one of the emergency actions that were deemed to be necessary for survival.

The σκουλακαταμειον of treasury of the Watch melted down the ox-head. This reference to the existence of a treasury of the Watch is unique; only the *Parastaseis* mentions it. The corps of Excubitors probably possessed some sort of treasury from its inception, but it is unclear whether its functions and capacity had included melting

¹⁵ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A.M. 6113 (ed. C. de Boor, Leipzig 1883, 1: 302-303): λαβὼν δὲ τὰ τῶν εὐαγῶν οἴκων χρήματα ἐν δανείῳ, ἀπορία κατεχόμενος ἔλαβε καὶ τῆς μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας πολυκάνδηλά τε καὶ ἕτερα σκεῦη ὑπουργικά, χαράξας νομίσματά τε καὶ μυρίαρῖσια πάμπολλα. Cf. Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum*, 14.15.38 (ed. Th. Büttner-Wobst, Bonn, 1897) 3: 208; Cedrenus (717 Bekker). Date of departure: *Chronicon Paschale* (ed. L. Dindorf, Bonn 1832) 1: 713-714. Heraclius in Pontos: T.S. Brown, A. Bryer, D. Winfield, “Cities of Heraclius”, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 4 (1978) 15-30.

metal at an earlier date. The Excubitors were charged with examining the credentials of soldiers and with fining those who were delinquent in the reign of Justinian; any such fines probably were deposited in the treasury of the Excubitors or Watch, even though there is no explicit testimony to the corps' treasury in connection with the collection and disposal of such fines. The total scope of the treasury is uncertain but obviously it could not only receive fines, but could melt down large metal objects, and presumably it also could and did use funds to accomplish recruitment of any army.¹⁶

The reference to military recruiting in the *Parastaseis* is very brief but extremely important. It shows that the participation in and responsibility of the Excubitors in general recruiting does not appear to have changed between the 620's and the middle of the reign of Justinian I. Furthermore, it emphasizes that coin was an indispensable medium for raising troops. That such was still the case in the wake of Heraclius' departure for Asia Minor in April of 622 indicates that any hypothesis — moreover undocumented — of a shift to some new system of recruiting troops through grants of lands, whether called *stratiotika ktemata* or some other form of public land grants, is very improbable.¹⁷ There is no reason to posit any creation of land grants to fund Heraclius' recruiting efforts in Asia Minor in the year 622 or the years that immediately followed. The passage from the *Parastaseis* is consistent with the statement of Theophanes in his *Chronographia* that Heraclius did recruit an army in Asia in 622-623 but it shows that such recruitment was accomplished in a traditional manner by the traditional institution, the Excubitors or *excubiae*, who had exercised that responsibility in the middle of the sixth century. In short, the passage from the *Parastaseis* shows that one must interpret in a traditional fashion the much debated

¹⁶ Pope Gregory I mentions no treasury for the Excubitors, even though he refers to a *scribon* paying soldiers, and others who recruited.

¹⁷ On the complex issue of *stratiotika ktemata*, see the important monograph by John Haldon, *Recruitment and Conscription in the Byzantine Army c. 550-950. A Study on the Origins of the Stratiotika Ktemata*. (Sitzungsberichte, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Bd. 357, 1979) esp. 66-81, who argues convincingly against their creation in 622, and includes major bibliography on the problem.

assertion of Theophanes that ἐντεῦθεν δὲ ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν θεμάτων χώρας ἀφικόμενος συνέλεγε τὰ στρατόπεδα καὶ προσετίθει αὐτοῖς νέαν στρατείαν. τούτους δὲ γυμνάζειν ἤρξατο καὶ τὰ πολεμικὰ ἔργα ἐξεπαίδευσεν.¹⁸

Advocates of the origin of soldiers' properties or *stratiotika ktemata* under Emperor Heraclius have pointed to 622 as the logical date for such an innovation; they have not suggested any later date in the 620's. Yet it is clear that in 622-623 monetary payments — as shown by the *Parastaseis* — were the medium for recruitment. Indirectly, Theophanes himself had suggested the importance of money in recruiting soldiers by his very reference to the need to borrow ecclesiastical vessels made of precious metals to finance the war. The text of the *Parastaseis* is, however, more specific, explicitly connecting the need for coin to the process of raising an army. There is no statement in extant sources suggesting any later date in the 620's for the initiation of land grants. Therefore the elimination of 622 because of the information in the passage from the *Parastaseis* is extremely important.

Curiously, the corps of Excubitors are associated with the Forum of the Ox in the imperial Book of Ceremonies compiled by Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus. It was at the Forum of the Ox that the domesticus of the Excubitors received the imperial family during its procession of the Feast of Ascension (although it is possible that this passage has been incorrectly transposed for the Feast of the Virgin). There is no explanation given in the Book of Ceremonies for the presence of the domesticus of the Excubitors at the Forum of the Ox and it seems impossible to date this particular section on the Feast of the Ascension.¹⁹

The continuing role of the Excubitors in recruiting in the 620's helps to explain the prominence of the Excubitors and their Count in many events of the late sixth and seventh centuries, because after the downgrading of the command of the Magister Militum Praesentalis in the fifth and early sixth centuries, the Count of the Excubitors was, as far as can be determined, the most important Byzantine military

¹⁸ Theophanes, *Chron.*, A.M. 6113 (1: 303 de Boor).

¹⁹ Constantine VII, *De cerimoniis* 1.8 (1: 51 Vogt).

commander, certainly the one with the best chance of rising to the imperial throne if a vacancy appeared (one thinks of Justin I, Tiberius II, and Maurice, as well as the disappointed ambitions of a Priscus and a Valentinus). Control of recruitment and the right to scrutinize the fitness of soldiers and officers to serve, in addition to physical proximity to the emperor and responsibility for his personal safety, made the Excubitors and especially their Count an extremely influential commander in a superbly well placed situation. There is no known text that clarifies when the Excubitors ceased to have any responsibilities in connection with the scrutinization of the fitness of soldiers, but a reasonable estimate is that it ceased with the reduction in importance of the Excubitors or Watch after the failure of the revolt of Valentinus, who was Count of the Excubitors, at the beginning of the 640's.²⁰

The Excubiae or Watch presumably accompanied Heraclius throughout his campaigns in Asia starting in 622. Heraclius explicitly mentions the presence of Excubitors in his camp at Ganzak in March, 628, in an official victory communication that the *Chronicon Paschale* preserves.²¹ In 626 or 627 there had been a census made of Byzantine soldiers who accompanied Heraclius. In that census or *exetasis* it was discovered that only two soldiers remained who had served with the previous emperor, Phocas. Byzantinists have often called attention to this census (because of its information about the ostensible attrition of soldiers).²² The primary sources, Theophylact Simocatta and Theophanes, do not explain any details about the procedures and the precise officials who accomplished this census.

²⁰ On the importance of the Excubitors in internal military politics, see: W.E. Kaegi, Jr. *Byzantine Military Unrest*, p. 33.

²¹ *Chronicon Paschale* (ed. L. Dindorf, Bonn 1832) 1: 730, οἱ τῆς σκουλλας. On the Germanic origin of this word for the Excubitors, E. Gamillscheg, *Romania Germanica* (Berlin, Leipzig, 1934) 1: 392. Date of Heraclius at Ganzak: F. Dölger, *Regesten*, Nr. 190 (Munich, Berlin 1924) 1: 21.

²² Theophylact Simocatta, *Hist.* 8.12.12 (ed. C. de Boor, r.p. Stuttgart 1972, p. 308); cf. Theophanes, *Chron.* A.M. 6103 (300 de Boor). On the date in 626: N.A. Oikonomides, "Les premières mentions des thèmes dans la Chronique de Théophane," *Zbornik Radova, Vizantoloshki Instituta*, Belgrade 16 (1975) 2-3.

One scholar has suggested that the census involved the *logothesion ton stratioton*, which was in charge of army muster-rolls in the ninth and tenth centuries, which lacks documentary proof for existence in the 620's.²³ If anything, the neglected text of the *Parastaseis* suggests the possibility that officers of the Excubitors may have undertaken or at least participated in that census. The fact that there was a census of soldiers in 626 or 627 does not prove the existence of a *logothesion ton stratioton* at that time; the Excubitors may have conducted such a scrutiny just as they had been doing back in the reign of Justinian I.

References in other primary sources also indicate the continuation of monetary payments and soldiers' grievances about inadequate monetary compensation in the 630's, specifically in some of the detailed narratives about the Arab conquest of Byzantine Palestine and Syria. Some Arabic sources report military unrest among Byzantine soldiers in Syria because their pay was in arrears; such soldiers were not supporting themselves from any kind of land grants. Those sources provide no information about the Excubitors but their description of a Byzantine army sensitive to monetary payments is consistent with the role of money in securing military services that the *Parastaseis* mentions for the previous decade.²⁴

The passage from *Parastaseis* is of exceedingly great importance in providing a rare statement about military institutions in the 620's. The passage has the ring of authenticity. Although it helps to eliminate the case for Heraclius as the creator of any comprehensive program of social, economic, military, and political reforms in the 620's, it increases his stature as a strategist and as a field commander, who was able to make skillful employment of existing tactical books and military institutions to fashion his ultimate decisive and

²³ Oikonomides, "Les premières mentions des thèmes" 6-7, following without discussion of the argument of Ernest Stein, "Ein Kapitel vom persischen und byzantinischen Staate", *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher* 1 (1920) 74-75; argument rejected, convincingly, by Haldon, *Recruitment and Conscription* n. 43 on p. 34. Unspecified logothete: *Chron. Pasch.* (721 Dindorf).

²⁴ al-Azdī al-Baṣrī, *Futūḥ al-Shām* 175-177; also, 151-152; Eutychius *Annales* ed. L. Cheikho (CSCO Scrip. Arab. Ser. 3, T. 7, Pt. 2, Louvain 1909) pp. 13-14.

smashing victory over the Sassanid Persians in 628. His victory over the Persians owed itself to many things but not the least of them was, simply put, his generalship — a subject that has been out of fashion for so long that it seems trite to list or discuss. It requires that the historian restudy and seek to appreciate even more — despite the scanty sources — the strategic and tactical brilliance of Heraclius' thrusts into Persia in the late 620's, including his obscure tactical maneuvers and improvisations.

Parastaseis 42 provides a glimpse into conditions during the 620's. It demonstrates continuity in military institutions with those of the sixth century, not any radical reform. Yet it is clear that the crisis of financing the army was so extreme that only the most desperate measures could provide the financial resources to perpetuate traditional recruiting. The highly unusual acts of melting sacred objects, vessels, and plate, and famous landmarks such as the ox-head of the Forum Bovis underscore the condition *in extremis* of the empire; such meltdowns could not have continued indefinitely, because one would have exhausted objects that could be melted. Existing procedures for recruiting indigenous soldiers were under such strain that other methods and institutions, it may have gradually become recognized, were necessary to produce and pay for adequate domestic military manpower, but that had not happened in 622 nor is there evidence that it happened later in the same decade or even in the following one, the 630's. The role of the Excubitors and their treasury in recruiting and paying soldiers was symptomatic of, if not a direct contribution to, the decline of the office of the *Comitiva Sacrarum Largitionum*, which had formerly collected the *aurum tironicum* (ostensibly a recruit substitute tax) and which had distributed coin payments (and uniforms) to soldiers.

II

The second institution also involves the problem of financing the Byzantine army, and more specifically, supplying it. Once again, it is a question of institutional procedures of the sixth century that survived into the seventh century. In contrast to the role of Excubitors in recruiting and paying new soldiers, a practice that was replaced in the Middle Byzantine Period by new methods, this

second institution was a precedent and a significant part of the background of the gradual development of the themes. In order to understand the genesis of the bureaucracy of the themes, one should again retrace the logic of interpretation of the civilian administration of the early themes back to the scholar who established the interpretation that has prevailed for half of a century: Ernst Stein.

Stein published a major article in 1920 entitled “Ein Kapitel vom persischen und byzantinischen Staate”, in which he investigated the early civilian bureaucratic structure of the themes. He correctly called attention to a protocol for the feast of Easter, mistakenly ascribed to Pentecost in the *De Cerimoniis* of Constantine VII.²⁵ The archaic Latin phrases and the inclusion of certain names of officials demonstrated that the protocol was very old, that it could not have been written later than some time in the seventh century. The fourth entree or group of officials who were to be presented contained the following officials: “The Praetorian Prefect, the Quaestor, the Proconsuls and Prefects of the themes”. (τὸν ὑπαρχὸν τῶν πραιτωρίων, τὸν κουαίστωρα, ἀνθυπάτους τῶν θεμάτων καὶ ἐπαρχούς).²⁶ and their wives are called later in the same protocol ἐπαρχίσας θεματικὰς ἀνθυπατίσας;²⁷ there can be no doubt, because of this reference to the wives, that the ἐπαρχούς of the Easter/Pentecost protocol were prefects of the themes, that ἐπαρχούς must be read with τῶν θεμάτων. The ἑπαρχοὶ presumably had a function in the themes, and they are again mentioned in the *Tacticon Uspenskii*, dated 842-843, in which they are called οἱ ἀνθύπατοι καὶ ἑπαρχοὶ τῶν θεμάτων.²⁸ Stein realized that

²⁵ Ernst Stein, “Ein Kapitel vom persischen und vom byzantinischen Staate”, *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher* 1 (1920) esp. 70-82.

²⁶ Constantine VII, *De Cerimoniis* 1.9 (ed. I.I. Reiske, Bonn 1829) vol 1: 61, and wives, 1: 67; in ed. and trans. of A. Vogt, 1: 56, wives, 1: 61. Note the remarks of Vogt in his commentary, vol. 1, 93: “Quant aux proconsuls des thèmes et aux éparques nous ne savons rien. Que ces personnages aient existé, cela ne fait pas de doute”. On p. 94 Vogt wonders whether both institutions disappeared in the ninth century.

²⁷ Constantine VII, *De Cerimoniis* 1.9 (1: 67 Reiske and 1: 61 Vogt).

²⁸ N. Oikonomides, *Les listes de préséance byzantines* (Paris 1972) 51, lines 25-26.

Constantine VII's reference to the "Proconsuls and Prefects of the Themes" was an invaluable clue to the character of the administration of the themes at a very early stage, because these proconsuls and prefects of the themes were different from the ordinary proconsuls and praetorian prefect who are mentioned separately in the protocol. It was a citation of the passage by the mediaeval legal historian Ernst Mayer in a 1903 article on the history of Dalmatia that first attracted Stein's interest. Mayer, who was not a Byzantinist, was not interested in any possible relevance of the passage for an understanding of thematic origins.²⁹ Stein devoted most of his labors to an analysis of the enigmatic proconsuls of the themes and their probable authority within the themes. His analysis remains basic; although it needs some modification, I have no intention to discuss it thoroughly here. Stein was convinced that the proconsuls of the themes were the most important civilian officials in the original themes, and that ultimately their powers devolved upon the protonotarii of the themes (by the tenth century). The proconsuls soon disappeared.

Stein did not say much about the prefects of the themes. Mayer had decided that the prefects (ἐπαρχοι) "deutlich die praesides provinciae sind",³⁰ but he cited no texts or modern authorities to support his opinion. Stein accepted Mayer's argument about the prefects of the themes without providing any substantial reasoning except that Mayer, a mediaevalist, had said it: "Die ἐπαρχοι, die hier drei Grade nach dem praefectus praetorio rangieren, müssen, wie Mayer erkannt hat, die Chefs der ἐπαρχίαι, also die rectores provinciarum sein".³¹ He concluded that the passage in the *De Cerimoniis* was proof for the sudden and total creation of the themes, not their gradual emergence.³² Since Mayer and Stein so

²⁹ Ernst Mayer, "Die dalmatisch-istrische Munizipalverfassung im Mittelalter und ihre römischen Grundlagen", *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Germanistische Abteilung* 24 (1903) 218n.

³⁰ Mayer, "Die dalmatisch-istrische Munizipalverfassung" 218n.

³¹ Stein, "Ein Kapitel" 71.

³² Stein, "Ein Kapitel" 75-77.

briefly identified the ἑπαρχοὶ or prefects of the themes in 1903 and 1920 there has been no discussion about them, except for a brief but important argument by Pertusi that the proconsuls and prefects of the themes demonstrated the existence of a civilian authority in the themes that from the beginning was distinct from and not dependent upon the military commander.³³ Oikonomides in his excellent *Listes de préséance byzantines* merely identified the prefects of the themes as "gouverneurs civiles" and referred his readers to the 1920 article by Stein.³⁴

There is a major difficulty with Mayer's and Stein's handling of the passage from the *De Cerimoniis*. The Greek word ἑπαρχος, pl. ἑπαρχοὶ, contrary to Mayer and Stein, cannot easily be identified with the *praeses*, *rector*, or *moderator*, that is, governor, of a Late Roman or Early Byzantine *provincia* or province. ἑπαρχος was normally used in a restricted sense to express some kind of *praefectus* or prefect. Even though the Greek word *eparchia* means a *provincia*, the word for its governor is not ἑπαρχος, but ἄρχων, κυβερνήτης, διοικητής, ἡγούμενος, ἡγεμών. Such was the practice up to Diocletian according to Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions*,³⁵ and in the Early Byzantine period according to the standard manual of papyrology that expressly warns against thinking that ἑπαρχος can refer to *praeses*: "Die Präsiden heissen titular nur ἡγεμών, nie ἑπαρχος".³⁶ The epigrapher Louis Robert, who was not interested in the problem of thematic origins, doubted Stein's identification because of his own epigraphic knowledge, but buried his criticisms in an obscure footnote where it has remained almost

³³ Pertusi, "La formation" 29.

³⁴ N. Oikonomides, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX^e et X^e siècles* (Paris 1972) 343, "gouverneurs civiles", and n. 323.

³⁵ H.J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions* (American Studies in Papyrology, Vol. 13, Toronto, 1974) 45, 139-140. On p. 140, "Colin's suggestion... that ἑπαρχος may mean 'provincial governor' by a kind of extrapolation from ἐπαρχεία must be rejected".

³⁶ L. Mitteis, U. Wilcken, *Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyrusurkunde* (Leipzig, Berlin 1912, and reprints) vol. 1, Pt. 1: 73 n. 4.

unnoticed.³⁷ Consultation of Justinianic legislation and a leading Roman legal historian, A.M. Honore (Oxford) shows that ἑπαρχος is not the appropriate Greek term for a *praeses* or governor in sixth-century legal texts. A separate check of the usage of *praeses*, *moderator*, and *rector* of a province in the word index of Justinian's *Novellae* also shows, when compared with the Greek texts, that *praeses*, *moderator*, and *rector* are expressing the Greek ἡγούμενος or ἄρχων but not ἑπαρχος.³⁸ Moreover, the glossary of difficult vocabulary in Greek hagiography, printed in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, also warns that it is incorrect to translate ἑπαρχος as *praeses*; the correct translation is *praefectus*.³⁹ As far as I can determine, the Greek and Latin word lists in glosses of the medieval period, some of which almost certainly date back to the Late Roman period, indicate that ἑπαρχος means *praefectus*, and although a number of Greek words appear in those glosses as the equivalent of a *praeses*, *rector* or

³⁷ L. Robert, *Hellenica* (Paris 1948) 4: 45 n. 1: "le travail de Stein ne donne aucun exemple de hyparchos au sens de gouverneur de province; il n'y a que quelques cas pour eparchos". Only one verse inscription, none in prose, from Asia Minor was known by Robert, who used the references of E. Hanton, "Lexique explicatif du Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes d'Asie Mineure", *Byzantion* 4 (1929) 88; the other examples in fact are to ἐπαρχία, not ἑπαρχος in Hanton's list.

³⁸ This conclusion results from my own reading of the Justinianic corpus, for which there is no thorough study of vocabulary (especially for the Novels). I also received a letter from the leading expert on Justinianic law, A. M. Honore, of Oxford, 26 August 1977, discussing the vocabulary in Greek for a *praeses* in the Novels of Justinian. A perusal of *Legum Iustiniani Imperatoris Vocabularium. Novellae. Pars Latina* (ed. Anna Maria Bartoletti Colombo, Milan, 1979) 7: 3166-3167 for *Praeses* (as well as other Latin words) for a provincial governor, and a comparison with the Greek originals, demonstrates that ἑπαρχος was not regarded as the equivalent of *praeses*, *rector*, *moderator*.

³⁹ *Onomasticon rerum et verborum difficiliorum quae in his patrum vitis occurrunt*, Migne, *Patrologia Latina* vol. 74: 487: PRAEFECTUS, ἑπαρχος. Diversus hic a praeside. Saepe tamen interpres ἐπαρχον non rite praesidem vertunt.

moderator of a province, ἑπαρχος is not among them.⁴⁰ It would be incautious to say that ἑπαρχος could never refer to a *praeses*, but it would be an extremely exceptional usage, very unlikely to occur in the official imperial court protocol for Pentecost. To summarize, the unsubstantiated and quick identification of ἑπαρχοι in the Easter protocol with the *praeses* or governor of a province by Ernst Mayer and Ernst Stein is very improbable, even untenable, in the light of known Greek usage for Late Roman institutions.

There is a better explanation for the ἑπαρχοι or prefects of the themes in the protocol of the *De Cerimoniis*. A thorough investigation of fifth-, sixth- and seventh-century Byzantine administrative practice reveals that there was a kind of prefect — not in existence at the time of the writing of the *Notitia Dignitatum* — who was the antecedent for the ἑπαρχοι in the passage from the *De Cerimoniis*. A.H.M. Jones, who was unaware of the official's possible relevance for the evolution of thematic structure, explained, "it became the practice to appoint a deputy praetorian prefect *ad hoc* to organise the supplies of an expeditionary force".⁴¹ At the

⁴⁰ *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum* (ed. G. Goetz, Leipzig 1888, 1892); *Eparchos* is a *praefectus* in 2: 306 even though in the same list *eparchia* means *provincia*. *Archon* means *prepositus/moderator/rector*//*magispatus/preses* on 2:247. *Hegemon* is equivalent to *dux/preses/princeps* (2: 323). Another list gives *praefectus* as the meaning for *eparkos* (tenth century), *Corp. Gloss. Lat.* 3: 517. According to L. Cantarelli who was speaking of usage in Late Roman and Early Byzantine Egypt, "il titolo poi di ἑπαρχος dato al preside di una provincia contraddice ai nostri documenti nei quali esso è chiamato sempre ἡγεμών", "L'ἑπαρχος Αἰγύπτου nei papiri di Theadelphia", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 22 (1913) 75. A more recent study shows the usage is extremely rare, exceptional, although it could occur: Claude Verdersleyen, *Chronologie des préfets d'Égypte de 284 à 395* (Collection Latomus, vol. 55, Brussels 1962) 102 n. 4; the normal words for a *praeses* were ἄρχων, ἡγεμών. The remarks by F. Dölger on the praetorian prefecture in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 40 (1940) 181 are worthless because of his uncharacteristic sloppiness; he relied totally upon Stein's 1920 article, and even gave a very erroneous page reference to it.

⁴¹ Jones, *LRE* 628, cf. 673-674. Cf. also, R. Grosse, *Römische Militärgeschichte von Gallienus bis zum Beginn der byzantinischen Themenverfassung* (Berlin 1920) 312, who viewed the office as the "Oberleitung" of the "Intendatur", in a very brief reference.

beginning of the twentieth century the character of this official was not understood, that is, when Mayer wrote his article. The sixth-century historian Procopius described that prefect as τοῦ στρατοπέδου... ἑπαρχος or “prefect of the army”, “prefect of the camp”,⁴² however by law this prefect was accorded the rank of a Praetorian Prefect even though he held an extraordinary appointment.⁴³ Procopius twice described his scope of duty “the officer charged with the maintenance of the army”.⁴⁴ These deputy prefects held the rank of a Praetorian Prefect; they were not lowly optiones, actuaries, or the old *praefectus castrorum*. Because they were accorded the rank of a regular Praetorian prefect, they may easily be confused with them. They were appointed by emperors. Some had previously held eminent civilian posts: Apion, the first known member of the distinguished Apion family of Egypt, served as prefect to the army in 503 at Edessa,⁴⁵ Calliopius of Berrhoea

⁴² Procop. *Bella* 3. 11. 17.

⁴³ Important law of 441 gives earliest reference to the office, its responsibilities, and the entitlement of its holder to the rank of a praetorian prefect: *Codex Justinianus*, 12.8.2.4, aut cur excellentissimus Pentadius non egisse dicitur praefecturam, cuius illustribus cincti dispositionibus vice praetorianae miles in expeditione copia comaeatuum abundavit, (ed. Paul Krueger, Berlin, r.p. 1959, 456.). E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* (Paris 1949) 2: 95 n. 2, realized that such prefects existed, and he criticized Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire* (2nd ed. London 1923) 1: 470, for not understanding that these prefects had the rank of praetorian prefect. But Stein was no longer interested in the passage in the *De Cerimoniis* — about which he had written when he was in his late twenties — when he was writing his opus on the Late Roman Empire, and so he did not see any possible connection. No relevant material on special prefects is found in, L.E.A. Franks, “The Fiscal Role and Financial Establishment of the Pretorian Prefecture in the Later Roman Empire” (Ph. D. diss., Christ’s College, Cambridge University, 1971).

⁴⁴ Procop. *Bella*, 3.11.17, οὕτω γὰρ ὁ τῆς δαπάνης χορηγὸς ὀνομάζεται. 3.15.13, τὸν τῆς δαπάνης χορηγὸν ἑπαρχον. The translation is that of H.B. Dewing, for the Loeb Classical Library edition of the *Wars*, vol. 2: 107, 135. Also see Procop. *Bella* 1.8.5, χορηγὸς δὲ τῆς τοῦ στρατοπέδου δαπάνης Ἀπίων Αἰγύπτιος ἐστάλῃ.

⁴⁵ Procop. *Bella*, 3.11.17. Cf. Stein, *HBE* 2: 245, on Archelaus. On Apion, Procop. *Bella* 1.8.5, and E.R. Hardy, *The Large Estates of Byzantine Egypt* (New York 1931) 25-28. Ἀπλίων ὁ Αἰγύπτιος, ἑπαρχος τότε τοῦ στρατεύματος ὢν καὶ τῆς δαπάνης καὶ τῆς ἐποψίας πάντων, Theoph. *Chron.* A.M. 5997, (ed. C. de Boor, Leipzig 1883, 1: 146).

(Aleppo), who had previously held the important office of Comes Orientis, replaced him as special prefect to the army in 504.⁴⁶ Archelaus had been Praetorian Prefect of the East from 524 to 527 and Prefect of Illyricum before Justinian appointed him to be special prefect to the expedition to Africa in 533. Procopius asserted that Archelaus even unsuccessfully debated the strategy for landing in Africa with Belisarius, attempting to justify his proposals in terms of the logistical needs of the army.⁴⁷ It seems that the office was sufficiently prestigious that its holder did not regard himself as the simple executor of the instructions of the commanding general. The historian Zachariah of Mitylene even identified Archelaus as one of the three men in charge of the expedition to Africa.⁴⁸ There was, already in the sixth century, a potential for the semi-independent role of some later thematic bureaucrats, i.e., the protonotarii. The titular praetorian prefect was, strictly speaking, *praefectus praetorio vacans*.

The special praetorian prefects had responsibilities that impinged on both civilian and military spheres. Emperors probably appointed distinguished men to this position to emphasize that they had a personal interest in their soldiers' welfare, to act as their personal representatives, to insure that the pay and provisions reached the soldiers and were not diverted to bureaucratic pockets, that is, to demonstrate their personal commitment to the scrupulous provisioning of their armies. The prefects were probably chosen for their reliability to the emperor and accordingly, they probably reported to him about problems and conditions within the army and concerning the soldiers and commanders and any other matters that they thought the emperor should know. They served, then, as troubleshooters and were a potential check on ambitious and unreliable generals. (It may be dangerous to engage in historical

⁴⁶ Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle*, chapters 54, 70, 77, 93, 99 (ed. trans. W. Wright, Cambridge University Press, 1882, pp. 44, 58, 63, 71, 75), esp. chapters 54, 70, 77.

⁴⁷ Procop. *Bella* 3.15. 2-17.

⁴⁸ Zachariah of Mitylene, *The Syriac Chronicle*, 9.17 (trans. F.J. Hamilton, E.W. Brooks, London, 1899, 262).

comparisons, but one can see a comparable set of institutions in seventeenth-century France, in the intendants and the intendants of the army. They, like the Praetorian Prefects and special prefects, were easily confused. The intendants of the army served to report to the King of France and Minister of War concerning the condition of the army and concerning the conduct of generals, while attending to the provisions and pay of French soldiers. They were not regular intendants).⁴⁹ Among the specific acts of two of these special prefects on the eastern frontier in the reign of Anastasius I was the supervision of the baking of bread for the soldiers, procuring and distributing flour to households to bake the bread for the troops. It is possible that these prefects were responsible for dividing up and assigning shares of military booty to officers.⁵⁰ Syriac sources sometimes simply call the official the *hyparchos* (ὑπάρχος).⁵¹ References are scattered in the sources; none provides a lengthy description of this unglamorous but important position.

Any connection between such early sixth-century prefects of the army Apion, Calliopius, and Archelaus and the early development of the themes sometime in the seventh century may seem far-fetched, because there would be a hiatus of a century or more. Yet the Syriac history of John of Ephesus mentions one such prefect in 577, again on the eastern front: Gregorius, who was in charge of paying the soldiers.⁵² Jones was not aware of him. Yet only the publication by A.-J. Festugière of previously unedited sections of the Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon (d. 613) in 1970 provided an example of such a prefect of the army at Ancyra (Ankara) in late 610, during

⁴⁹ Douglas C. Baxter, *Servants of the Sword. French Intendants of the Army 1630-1670* (Urbana, Ill., 1976).

⁵⁰ Possible role in dividing booty: *Codex Justinianus*, 1.46. 5 = *Basilica* 6.1.97.

⁵¹ Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle*, chs. 54, 70, 77, 93 (44, 58, 63, 71 Wright); John of Ephesus, *Hist. Eccl.* 6.14 (ed., trans. E.W. Brooks, *CSCO*, Script. Syr., Versio, Ser. 3, T. 3 [Louvain 1936] 235).

⁵² John of Ephesus, *Hist. Eccl.* 6.14 (235 Brooks): praefectus [ὑπάρχος] praetorianorum cui nomen fuit Gregorius ut copiarum sumptus [δαπάνη] disponeret et curaret... (translation from the Syriac).

the rebellion of the commanding general, Comentiolus. The author (George) of the *vita* mentioned Εὐτυχιανὸς δὲ ὁ ἐνδοξότατος ἀνὴρ ἐπαρχὼν τοῦ στρατοῦ, who corresponded with St. Theodore, asking him to pray for the end of the rebellion.⁵³ Eutyḥianos' prominence is underscored by his rank of ἐνδοξότατος or *gloriosissimus*, the highest rank in the seventh century, and, we know from a contemporary source, was the rank held by an ordinary Praetorian Prefect in 615.⁵⁴ This is evidence that the practice of appointing deputy prefects *ad hoc* continued into the early seventh century: it may have become a standard rather than extraordinary procedure, but there are no conclusive data.

Whatever the etymology of the word θέμα, scholars agree that it quickly became synonymous with "army". One should consider the possibility that what Procopius called τοῦ στρατοπέδου.. ἑπαρχος or prefect of the army/camp in the middle of the sixth century had become transformed into ἐπαρχους τῶν θεμάτων, prefects of the themes in the seventh century, and so appeared in the protocol of the *De Cerimoniis* and as an anachronism, in the *Tacticon Uspenskii* in the middle of the ninth century. It is uncertain whether the prefects of the themes were responsible for any tasks beyond those of their predecessors, the prefects of the army, who had been in charge of supplies. The office of prefect of the themes is mentioned only in the *De Cerimoniis* and the *Tacticon Uspenskii*, not in any narrative or

⁵³ *Vie de Théodore de Sykéôn*, c. 152 (ed. A.-J. Festugière, *Subsidia Hagiographica*, no. 48, Brussels, 1970, 1: 123, line 54). On the background of the revolt of Comentiolus: W.E. Kaegi, Jr., "New Evidence on the Early Reign of Heraclius", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 66 (1973) 308-330.

⁵⁴ *Chronicon Paschale* (ed. L. Dindorf, Bonn 1832) 1: 707, for a Praetorian Prefect in 615 with the rank of ἐνδοξότατος. On the rank of ἐνδοξότατος and its superlative character in the seventh century: P. Koch, *Die byzantinische Beamtentitel von 400 bis 700* (Jena 1903) 70.

other documentary sources.⁵⁵ In the absence of more data, it is incorrect to identify the prefect of the theme as a civil governor. It is conceivable that the official who was in charge of military provisioning may have gained considerable authority in the civilian sphere, but one must stress that his office probably originated from the need to provide a steady, honest, and dependable stream of provisions to the army, not from the civilian powers of the *praesides* or governors of the old Justinianic and pre-Justinianic provinces, which still retained some identity throughout the seventh century. Because of their responsibility for the material well-being of an army, these prefects would have been able to override local provincial officials. Indeed, in the sixth century, Justinianic legislation attempted to meet local complaints about arrogant and irresponsible behavior on the part of vicarii or deputies of praetorian prefects and masters of the soldiers who extorted levies from civilians with or without legitimate reason. Justinian attempted to limit the practice.⁵⁶ It is easy to see how the prefects assigned to armies for the supervision of the provisioning of soldiers continued to handle financial responsibilities, provisioning, and bureaucratic paperwork when those Late Roman armies were transformed into thematic armies in the seventh century. However this is a hypothetical reconstruction, not an absolute certainty. As a prefect, he was responsible not only to the commanding general but to the prefecture, as long as it existed, and to the emperor, from whom he

⁵⁵ In the *Tacticon Uspenskii* dated to 842-843, in latest edition by N. Oikonomides, *Les listes de préséance byzantines* 51, lines 25-26. Cf. comment in A. Vogt commentary on Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *Livre de cérémonies, Commentaire* (Paris 1935, r.p. 1967) 1: 93-94. See also the remarks of R. Guiland in his essay, "Le Proconsul", *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines* (Berlin, Amsterdam 1967) 2: 69-71. J.B. Bury, *The Imperial Administrative System in the Ninth Century* (London 1911, r.p. New York) 18-19, admitted that there was a large problem about the proconsuls and prefects of the themes in the *Tacticon Uspenskii*, but he avoided any explanation: "A large question of considerable difficulty, touching the position and the districts of these officials, and their relations to the Strategoi, is involved, and I have not been able to discuss it in the present investigation".

⁵⁶ Justinian, Nov. 134.1.

held his appointment. Stein long ago realized that the enigmatic protonotarius of the theme probably derived from the defunct officium of the Praetorian Prefecture, but he did not understand precisely how the term survived; he assumed that it somehow descended from the officium of the Proconsuls of the early themes.⁵⁷ That is indeed possible, but even more likely is the survival of the term protonotarius from the officium of a genuine Praetorian Prefect, albeit *ad hoc*, that is, from the officium of the special prefects of the army whose officia probably paralleled (although they were probably smaller in number) those of the ordinary Praetorian Prefecture.

The title of prefect disappeared for some unexplained reason in the course of time — perhaps because of jealousies between the prefects and the strategoi, or simply because the term became an anachronism with the disappearance of the bloated Praetorian Prefecture; one cannot make any certain conclusion. But it appears that the head notary of the officium of the prefect of the thematic army continued to exercise some of the same functions of victualling the army and its beasts, and providing other supplies that his predecessors, the prefects of the army, had performed in the sixth century.⁵⁸

The responsibility of the protonotarius for supplying food to soldiers and beasts for a military expedition, his role in paying the soldiers, all suggest that this critical office — the second most important in the theme — did evolve from the functions that are attested for prefects of the army in the sixth century. It is uncertain whether the exact stages of that evolution will ever be known in detail. A comparison of the functions of the sixth-century prefect of the army and the tenth-century protonotarius provides indications both as to the military needs — supplies, — that required the genesis of the “civilian” bureaucracy of the theme and as to otherwise

⁵⁷ Stein, “Ein Kapitel” 79-82.

⁵⁸ Textual references to the responsibility of the protonotarius of the theme for food and supplies for military expeditions and for the passage of the emperor and his accompanying armies: Constantine VII, *De Cerimoniis* (1: 451, 476-477, 486-487, 464, 489 Reiske).

unattested functions of early prefects of the themes, which surely involved, among other responsibilities, finances and provisions for the soldiers and their animals. In any case, the prefects of the themes mentioned in the Easter protocol of the *De Cerimoniis* did not reflect a stage in the merger of the governors and the old Diocletianic-Justinianic-Constantinian provinces into the theme system. Stein was wrong (although he was correct to point to the text as an important one). They represented a stage in the evolution of the bureaucratic apparatus for provisioning the army, a process that had its earliest traceable origin in the fifth century. They were a major link between the armies of the age of Justinian and the structure of the early themes. From the beginning, it appears that the emperor and his bureaucrats had an institution that could act as an independent control on finances and as an independent source of information on affairs and personalities within the army and its jurisdiction.

The evolution of the special praetorian prefects into prefects of the themes is a specific example of slow or gradual transformation of older Late Roman institutions into thematic ones. It conforms to A.H.M. Jones' observations about the slow, almost imperceptible character of institutional change in the Late Roman Empire, and to the views of Gelzer and Diehl about the gradual development of the themes.⁵⁹

The disappearance of the prefects of the themes probably was related to the broader and still unclear problem of the disappearance of the entire bloated and inefficient Praetorian Prefecture, and perhaps also to the absence of the need for the same kind of system of distributing provisions when there no longer were the kind of Byzantine expeditionary armies that had caused earlier governments to create and use such special prefects in the fifth and sixth centuries. The office is still mentioned in the ninth-century Tacticon Uspenskii but it probably was already a vestigial anachronism.⁶⁰ It is possible

⁵⁹ Jones, *Later Roman Empire* vi; H. Gelzer, *Die Genesis der byzantinischen Themenverfassung* 8-72; C. Diehl, "L'Origine du regime des thèmes dans l'empire byzantin", *Études byzantines* (Paris 1905) esp. 289-292.

⁶⁰ N. Oikonomides, *Listes de préséance byzantines* 51, lines 25-26.

that newer methods of supporting soldiers — even land grants to soldiers, although more documentation is needed about this, — contributed to the disappearance of the institution. It is no longer mentioned in the tenth century protocols. The strategoi or generals of the themes may also have resented the potential rivalry of such prefects and succeeded in eliminating them, leaving only protonotarii. But this is a conjecture. There remain many questions to be answered, but the solution is much closer than it was a few years ago. There is no evidence to show that special prefects were appointed for all expeditionary armies in the sixth century, although Justinian's Novel 134 indicates that they became common in the east.⁶¹ One cannot be certain that every thematic army possessed such a prefect; the protocol in the *De Cerimoniis* is not that specific. Archelaus ceased to be prefect of the army in 534 when Justinian reestablished the prefecture of Africa and appointed Archelaus to be its Prefect;⁶² this is an unusual case that demonstrates how one special military prefect was employed by an emperor to reconstitute civilian authority over several traditional provinces. The special circumstances of Africa in 533 and 534 may have no relevance for ways in which seventh-century prefects acted or attempted to act within the emerging thematic armies. The case of Archelaus simply shows one way in which the powers of a special prefect of the army could develop into a full-blown civilian prefecture; that line of development did not take place in the seventh century. One cannot prove whether these special prefects became a general phenomenon.

The Praetorian Prefecture is normally described as a "civilian" authority. The special prefects of the army or deputy praetorian prefects were a hybrid institution, a vital link between the emperor, the Praetorian Prefecture, and the given army. Their powers were not simply "civilian". They represented the Praetorian Prefecture, but they were assigned to a particular army and they performed their

⁶¹ Justinian, Nov. 134. 1 (ed. R. Schoell, G. Kroll, Berlin, r.p. 1959, 677): Solum vero iubemus esse loci servatorem praefecturae in Osroena et in Mesopotamia, et si necessitas vocaverit, in allis locis tempore expeditionis pro nutrimentis eius destinatos, et hoc quidem per nostram iussionem.

⁶² *Codex Justinianus* 1.27.

responsibilities in a military context. It is easy to see how their responsibilities overlapped both military and civilian spheres, a trend, moreover, that was apparent in a number of sixth-century institutional arrangements — especially in the reign of Justinian I.⁶³ The military institution of the prefect of the army, which can only be understood from the sources of the sixth century, joins the Quaestor Justiniani Exercitus and the Justinianic praetors and proconsuls who held joint civil and military authority (Novels 24-31), as sixth-century institutional developments that anticipated and contributed to the institutional changes of the seventh century.⁶⁴

The explanation for the civil and military authority within early thematic units is more complex than hitherto assumed, but comprehensible when viewed in the longer perspective of military institutional developments. The early commanders or *strategi* of the themes did not develop their bureaucracy *ex nihilo*. One of the probable but neglected sources of that bureaucracy, completely misunderstood until now, was the special praetorian prefect, the prefect of the army and his *officium*, that were already in existence and that were a natural substructure on which to develop a bureaucracy. Part of the thematic bureaucracy probably developed from the responsibilities of the prefect for victualling the army. The prefect had always been inferior to the commanding general with respect to military decisions — although he might debate strategy with the general, especially if there were special problems of provisioning.

The two institutional phenomena that are the subject of this investigation are examples of transitional practices and changes of the sixth and early seventh century that do not fit into any standard schema of classic Late Roman or Middle Byzantine institutional structures. They respectively arose, one presumes, out of the inability of the *Comitiva Sacrarum Largitionum* and the Praetorian

⁶³ Justinianus, Nov. 28-31, 41, 50.

⁶⁴ Ernst Stein, "Zum frühbyzantinischen Staatsrecht", *Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Reiches* (Stuttgart 1919) 165-168, for an important analysis of the Quaestura Justiniani Exercitus.

Prefecture to discharge certain vital responsibilities efficiently. Yet both the involvement of Excubitors in recruitment and the creation of some specific military prefects ad hoc failed to solve basic problems and in turn they disappeared, gradually replaced by what is somewhat erroneously called a theme "system". Yet they existed at the beginning of the reign of Heraclius, and it is strikingly clear that Heraclius had not fundamentally changed the nature of recruiting and financing his armies early in the 620's.

TWO NOTES ON BYZANTINE DEMOGRAPHY OF THE ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES

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It is needless to say how important demography might be for Byzantine studies, and needless to say, too, that the Byzantine demographic studies are scarcely an eyelash away from their embryonic stage — not because of the lack of scholarly eagerness but rather because of the scarcity of our sources, which makes it hard to arrive at any statistics. Angeliki Laiou-Thomadakis' book¹ presents a happy exception but we have to bear in mind that the author is dealing there with the peasant society of the first half of the fourteenth century which forms a unique period of time in Byzantine history. For its investigation an abundant amount of the so-called *praktika* is available — that is of the lists of the rustic population with indications concerning peasants', families, fields, vineyards, and livestock. No source of such a type is to be found for other epochs. For other epochs a scholar has to be satisfied with scanty and occasional evidence drawn from different sources,² with unreliable data leading, of necessity, to hazardous conclusions. But we have no option: we cannot afford simply to jettison demographic problems; Quite the contrary — our task is to gather the slightest hints that

¹ A.E. Laiou-Thomadakis, *Peasant Society in the Late Byzantine Empire* (Princeton, N.J. 1977). P. Karlin-Hayter's report ("Preparing the Data from Mount Athos for Use with Modern Demographic Techniques", *Byz* 48 [1978] 501-11 and her review, *ibid.*, p. 580-5) seems to me too severe and lopsided, without demonstrating the positive and provocative significance of this pioneering monograph.

² Some problems were touched by P. Charanis in his several articles collected eventually under the title *Studies on the Demography of the Byzantine Empire* (London, 1972) and by H. Antoniadis-Bibicou: "Problèmes d'histoire économique de Byzance au XI^e siècle: démographie, salaires et prix", *BS* 28 (1967) 255-61; "Démographie, salaires et prix à Byzance", *Annales* 27 (1972) 215-46; "Villages désertés en Grèce", in *Villages désertés en histoire économique* (Paris, 1965).

allow us to arrange our meager figures, check them up by comparing various rows of data, and try to conceive "the physical sense" of the results attainable.

I

Angeliki Laiou-Thomadakis in the above-quoted book (p. 271) has emphasized that even for her period an age structure of society can be calculated only with a very uncertain accuracy. She suggested nonetheless that 71 percent of the females would have died before reaching 45 and 74 percent of the males would have reached no more than 50 (p. 296). For the earlier period only crude and vague figures are available.

According to Nicholas Mysticus (ep. 29.47-49) very few of his contemporaries would have reached the age of 70. Psellos in *Chronography* (II, p. 151 §27.8) corroborates this point when he says that Constantine X, who died at 60, has completed all his life term. At the end of the twelfth century Basil Padiadites complained about the hard conditions of life on the island of Korkyra, where a man of 50 was considered to be old and a man of 60 already decrepit.³ It seems evident, from Padiadites' lamentations, that the normal age span in Byzantium was significantly longer. We may try to approach the problem from another side. Marc Bloch affirmed that the average adult in the medieval West had lived a relatively short life;⁴ to illustrate this idea, he cited the example of the Saxon dynasty in Germany the four members of which had reached respectively 60, 28, 22, and 52. We can compare with these figures the data concerning the Comnenian dynasty in Byzantium: the life span of Byzantine emperors happened to be more considerable. Alexios I dies at about 70, John II at 56, Manuel at about 57; Andronic I was executed at about 62, and only Alexius II was murdered at the age of

³ S. Lampros, *Kerkyraika anekdota* (Athens, 1882) 48.21-3. A. Guillou, *La civilisation byzantine* (Paris, 1974) accepts 60 as a normal life expectancy for the Byzantines.

⁴ M. Bloch, *La société féodale*, I (Paris, 1949) 117.

14.⁵

Certainly, these figures can be happenstance. However we can enlarge our comparison by including the data concerning the age expectancy of a specific social group whose biographies can be relatively well established, that is of literati. Basing our study on the list of the *Tusculum-Lexicon* (Munich, 1963) we get the conclusion that Byzantine literati of the end of the eleventh and the twelfth centuries would have died at a rather high average age of 71 (15 writers taken into consideration). The respective life term of the Late Roman writers of the fourth century (27 men) amounts to 67; of Greek and Latin authors of the sixth century (13 men), to 62 only; and of western writers of the end of the eleventh and of the twelfth centuries (more than a hundred), to 63.

II

One of the most striking puzzles that we have to cope with is that Byzantium survived after the loss of the provinces that were the major source of grain supply for the Late Roman Empire: Egypt and North Africa were conquered by the Arabs respectively in the mid-seventh and in the beginning of the eight centuries, Sicily was lost by 902, and the steppes of the Northern shore of the Black sea also ceased to be an imperial granary as far as we know from the correspondance of the Pope Martin exiled to Cherson in 655. A hypothesis was launched that the loss of an external grain supply had fostered the agrarian development of Italy in the fifth century;⁶ might we suppose the same for the agriculture of Asia Minor and the Balkan peninsula?

The point of departure of our following considerations is the observation made by Evelyn Patlagean that the daily bread ration

⁵ G. Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates* (Munich, 1963) 326 makes him die at the age of twelve, but Alexius was born in 1169 and assassinated in 1183 (see P. Wirth, "Wann wurde Kaiser Alexius II. Komnenos geboren", *BZ* 49 [1956] 65-7).

⁶ K. Hannestad, *L'évolution des ressources agricoles de l'Italie du 4ème au 6ème siècle de notre ère* (Copenhagen, 1962) 106 f. See also V.G. Gavrilov, "Sel'skoe chozjajstvo Italii IV v.n.e", *Vestnik drevnej istorii* (1979) No 4.

in the Late Roman Empire had oscillated from 3 through 6 pounds.⁷ Unexpectedly, the respective figures for the twelfth century Byzantium happen to be exorbitantly lower.

The typikon of the monastery of John Baptist *tu Phoberu* states that different people eat different quantities of bread: some remain hungry after finishing two pounds a day, while others are satisfied by one pound or even by six ounces, that is by a half-pound.⁸ Thus we can assume a pound and a half as an average daily ration, the figure that can be approached also by a different way of calculating. Michael Attaleiates enjoined in his will of 1077 that 18 widows and old men had been granted, 216 "annonary" *modioi* of bread a year (MM V, 306. 14-17; 320. 11-12), that is 12 *modioi* for a person, or a *modios* monthly. An "annonary" *modios* makes $\frac{2}{3}$ of a sea-*modios*, that is $26 \frac{2}{3}$ pounds.⁹ Prodromos indicates the same ration while saying that 12 "medimnoi" (an archaic term to designate the *modios*-the sea-*modios*?) are hardly sufficient to nurture 13 persons during a month.¹⁰

If the Byzantine "liter" corresponded to the Roman *libra*¹¹ and if Patlagean's tables are correct, we are coming across an appalling reduction of bread consumption during the period after the sixth century. How might this reduction be explained?

Scanty evidence of the Later Roman Period permits us to suggest a serious "understocking", at any rate in several regions of the Empire: the cadastral records show one horse, 29 head of cattle, some more than 150 sheep 3 oxen and 20 goats on the area of about 870 acres in Mitylene, and 3 oxen, 2 donkeys, and 15 sheep on 275

⁷ E. Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance. 4e-7e siècles* (Paris, 1977) 46, 52.

⁸ A.I. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Noctes Petropolitanae* (S. Petersburg, 1913) 13. 16-18.

⁹ E. Schilbach, *Byzantinische Metrologie* (Munich, 1970) 99 f.

¹⁰ D.C. Hesseling, H. Pernot, *Poèmes prodromiques en langue vulgaire* (Amsterdam, 1910) 41. On the Byzantine *medimnos* see E. Schilbach, *Byzantinische Metrologie*, 97 f.

¹¹ E. Schilbach, *Byzantinische Metrologie*, 174 calculates its weight as 320 gr.

acres in Thera, while a similar record from Lydia mentions no stock at all.¹² The Byzantine country-side presented a completely different picture. Already in the Farmer's Law the cattle-breeding seems to have a priority over the cultivation of soil: 37 articles treat the attitude toward cattle and flock, while 22 are concerned with fields and crop, 10 with vineyards and gardens, and 4 with mills. The articles dedicated to the damage of field or vineyard committed by an animal primarily protect the animal from the proprietor of the damaged allotment: he was obliged to return the animal demanding at the same time a compensation. The damaging ox was protected even after two fines or compensations (n° 53) while pigs or sheep were allowed to be killed after two incidents of damage (n° 49). *Slaves and hired laborers are mentioned in the Farmer's Law only in connection with the pasturage.* The Book of the Eparch testifies to the developed meat-trade in Constantinople: not only special guilds of butchers and porkmongers are known, but the so-called *saldamarii* would sell meat in their shops (XIII, 1) and the so-called *bothroi* had the commitment to serve as intermediaries in the purchase of animals. The cattle were brought to Constantinople mostly from Nicomedia or the regions beyond the Sangarios (XV, 3). Even the inhabitants of islands raised significant herds: in the twelfth century a Russian pilgrim Daniil was astonished at the amount of stock he saw on the islands of Patmos, Rhodes, and Cyprus.¹³ Bulgaria became one of the most important cattle-breeding areas; we even might surmise that the proportion of cattle (with regard to flock and swine) increased gradually: at any rate, the osteological investigations of animal bones excavated at the Bulgarian site of

¹² C.E. Stevens, *Agriculture and Rural Life in the Later Roman Empire*, in *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, I (Cambridge, 1966) 95.

¹³ Daniil, *Zit'e i chožen'e. Pravoslavnyj Palestinskij sbornik* 1.3 (1885) 8.

Popino lead to such an inference.¹⁴

J.L. Teall came to a conclusion, on the basis of hagiographic texts and Prodomos' verses, that the everyday Byzantine ration consisted mainly of bread, fish and vegetables and the bread formed the most important element of Byzantine alimentation; I pursued his conclusion.¹⁵ However the "catastrophic" decrease of grain consumption forcibly leads us to a hypothesis that meat, cheese and milk occupied in the Byzantine ration a more considerable place than it had in the Late Roman empire.

Many times scholars have stressed the devastating influence of Byzantine famines, especially the crop failure of 927-28 and disasters of the eleventh century. But is it incidental that we have almost no evidence concerning famine of the twelfth century?¹⁶ Moreover, the Byzantines managed, from the twelfth century on, to export grain, wine, and meat to Italy.¹⁷ Particularly important is the

¹⁴ Ž. Vužarova, *Slavjano-bulgarskoto selišče kraj sela Popino, Silistrensko* (Sofia, 1956) 89. The analysis of bone remnants at the site of Džedžovi lozja, in the same region, reveals different results, that is an increasing role of the flock (Ž. Vužarova, *Slavjanski i slavjanobulgarski selišča v bulgarski zemi ot kraja na VI-XI vek* [Sofia, 1965] 208, tab. 2); we have however to take into consideration that the village of Džedžovi lozja ceased to exist by the middle of the eleventh century. There are many data concerning the high level of cattle-and flock-raising in Byzantine Bulgaria — for instance Acropolites, *Opera* I (Leipzig, 1903) 18.13-4; J. Darrouzès, "Deux lettres de Grégoire Antiochos", *BS* 23 (1962) 280.63-4; R. Browning, "Unpublished Correspondence between Michael Italicus, Archbishop of Philippopolis, and Theodore Prodomos", *Byzantinobulgarica* I (1962) 285.82-9. However they do not comprise any qualitative, comparable, demographic material.

¹⁵ J.L. Teall, "The Grain Supply of the Byzantine Empire, 330-1025", *DOP* 13 (1959) 98 f.; A.P. Kazhdan, "Skol'ko eli vizantiycy?", *Voprosy istorii* (1970) No 9, 215-8.

¹⁶ Some local famines are mentioned: E. Sargologos, *La Vie de Saint Cyrille le Philéote* (Brussels, 1964) XIV, 2, p.84.26, XLIV, 1, p.209.1, XLVIII, 1, p.235.29; S. Doanidu, "He paraitesis Nikolau tu Muzalon apo tes archiepiskopes Kypru", *Hellenika* 7 (1934) 136.893; MM V, p.395.1, 395.33-396.1; Nicetas Choniatae *Orationes et epistulae* (Berlin, New York, 1972) 190.4-15. But even such a critical author as Nicetas Choniates is silent about nation-wide famines.

¹⁷ A. Schaube, *Handelsgeschichte der romanischen Völker des Mittelalters bis zum Ende der Kreuzzüge* (Munich, Berlin, 1906) 238, 245.

evidence of an unpublished monody on Nicholas Hagiotheodorites by Eustathius of Thessalonica (Escorial. Y-II-10, fol. 35 r), where the hero has been praised for sending grain from his diocese in Peloponnesus to the other coast of the Ionian sea (i.e., to Italy) and to Illyricum.

The figures concerning crop capacity of the twelfth century are scanty and unbelievable. Eustathius of Thessalonica boasted that he had harvested 59 medimnoi from the field where he had sowed only 3 medimnoi of grain.¹⁸ Even more fabulous figures are given in an unpublished speech by Gregory Antiochos to Andronicus Kamateros (Escorial. Y-II-10, fol. 334 rv): the rhetor mentioned thirty-, sixty- and hundred-fold yields. It would be very hazardous to build any far-fetched theory on the basis of such data.

Nevertheless, western chroniclers unanimously praised the riches of Byzantine agricultural production and the abundance of bread, wine, oil, and cheese in Byzantium,¹⁹ and a Jewish writer of the twelfth century, Samuel ben Meyr, affirmed that the apiculture reached in "the Greek kingdom" a higher level than in his country, in Northern France.²⁰

All these facts are scanty and vague, but they coincide with the data, which indicate an unexpectedly long life expectancy in the twelfth-century Byzantium. In any case, they convey an impression that the traditional opinion of the economic crisis and collapse of Byzantium in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is far from being true. I tried to undermine this traditional opinion by drawing

¹⁸ Eustathius Thessalonicensis, *Opuscula* (Frankfurt a.M., 1832) 155.69-71.

¹⁹ A. P. Kazhdan, "Iz ekonomiceskoj zizni Vizantii XI-XII vv.", *Vizantijskie Ocerki* (Moscow, 1971) 190 f.

²⁰ S. Krauss, *Studien zur byzantinisch-jüdischen Geschichte* (Leipzig, Vienna, 1914) 113.

attention to the urban development of those days;²¹ this idea, first rejected and then forgotten has found endorsement in a series of recent works.²² Is not the rural development of this epoch to be reconsidered as well?

²¹ A.P. Kazhdan, "Vizantijskie goroda v VII-XI vv", *Sovetskaja archeologija* 21 (1954) 164-88. In a revised and elaborated form — A.P. Kazhdan, *Derevnja i gorod v Vizantii, IX-X.* (Moscow, 1960), esp. p.246-9, 260-72. The most important objections were made by G. Ostrogorsky (now in his *Zur byzantinischen Geschichte* [Darmstadt, 1973] 99-118), S. Vryonis (now in his *Byzantium: its Internal History and Relations with the Muslim World* [London, 1971], pt. VII) and I.V. Sokolova, "Klady vizantijskich monet kak istocnik po istorii Vizantii VIII-XI vv.", *VizVrem* 15 (1959) 50-63.

²² M.F. Hendy, "Byzantium, 1081-1204: an Economic Reappraisal", *Transactions of the R. Historical Society*, 5th Ser., 20 (1970) 31-52; C. Foss, *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis* (Cambridge, Mass and London, 1976) 66-76 and *Ephesus after Antiquity* (Cambridge, 1979) 116-37, esp. p.123, n.29; C. Morrisson, "La dévaluation de la monnaie byzantine au XIe siècle", *TM* 6 (1976) 3-47, esp. p.27 f.; P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977) ch.V (with my remarks in *Byz* 49 [1979] 497-503); P. Tivčev, "Sur les cités byzantines aux XIe-XIIe siècles", *Byzantinobulgarica* 1 (1962) 145-82.

THE EMPEROR IN BYZANTINE ART OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY

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Byzantine religious painting can be studied primarily on the basis of what survives, but the study of Byzantine imperial art depends to a much greater extent on a knowledge of what has been lost. The survival of miniature representations — in manuscripts, enamels, ivories, steatites, coins, and seals — and of a small number of monumental works, mainly in churches, cannot adequately compensate for the fact that we can no longer see imperial subject-matter depicted in its own architectural setting: the city streets and squares, and the halls and chambers of the imperial palace. We should form an inadequate idea of the place of imperial iconography in the art and society of medieval Constantinople, if written evidence were not available.

Much of the relevant documentation has been used by Grabar in his seminal study of Byzantine imperial iconography;¹ several important texts have been collected and translated by Mango in his anthology of written sources for Byzantine art,² and Wessel has provided a useful survey of imperial portraiture in the *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*.³ However, Byzantine literature contains several references to imperial portraiture to which attention has not yet been drawn. While individually they contain few, if any, surprises, together they add greatly to the stock of available

¹ A. Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Paris, 1936, reprinted, London, 1971).

² Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453, Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), 46-8, 108-113, 117-8, 128, 130-1, 133, 141, 154, 192-9, 220-1, 224-8, 234-5, 245-6.

³ K. Wessel, "Kaiserbild," *RBK*, 3 (Stuttgart, 1976), cols. 722-853 with extensive bibliography.

information about the variations in and contexts of state pictorial propaganda.

A large number of such references date from or refer to the twelfth century, and combined with those already known, they make this period the best documented in the history of Middle Byzantine official portraiture. This fact is in itself significant for our understanding of both the period and the genre, and, it is hoped, justifies the twofold purpose of the present work: first, to assemble and interpret all the relevant twelfth-century texts of which translations or, in some cases, editions do not exist; second, to assess the general significance of imperial art under the Komnenoi and Angeloi (1081-1204). The method adopted here has been to present a full translation of each text, preceded by the Greek original if this is not available in print, and followed by a commentary in two parts, which broadly speaking represents the separate approaches of the authors. The first part discusses the problems of interpreting the internal evidence of the text, relating this as far as possible to other textual evidence as well as to the historical context. The second attempts to make the evidence intelligible in terms of surviving works of art. It should be noted that the title at the head of each piece is part of the translated material.

The first two texts are poems of Nicholas Kallikles, a court doctor who ministered to Emperor Alexios I (1081-1118) on his deathbed and seems to have enjoyed close ties with the Palaiologos family. The poems evidently refer to murals commissioned for buildings in one of the major imperial palaces, the Great Palace or the Blachernae.

Edition: L. Sternbach, 'Nikolai Calliclis carmina', *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejetnosci, Wydział filologiczny* (Krakow), 2nd series, 21 (1904), 315-92.

I (1081-1118) On the Second Coming in the Palace (pp. 337-8)

The thrones set up, the opened books, the trumpet raising the lid of every tomb, and the Spirit giving life to the dead; the thousands of praying spirits and the myriads of worshipping angels indicate, O Christ, your final coming. Here is a dread judge and a strange judgement seat. Who are the accusers? Deeds alone. Whom do they

accuse? Those who have stumbled. Henceforth I stand in fear of your judgement, tryer of reins and weigher of hearts. The left hand order and flame consume me. Ai! Ai! A river of fire swirls around me, a sleepless worm is in me, devourer of my bones. Indeed, sceptres are but smoke, the purple but dust, all splendour but nothing, and the crown but a bauble. If my works burn with me, I shall be punished; only by fire shall I be saved. Judges, as you look upon these things, put aside all consideration of persons and of gain, and keep the scales of justice balanced. "In what measure ye judge,⁴ ye shall be judged by me"; the saying is God's, and to be believed. This is what I have to say and paint for you, I Alexios Komnenos, King of the Ausonians.

The Last Judgment scene from a tradition of religious rather than imperial iconography was featured in the mural programmes of Byzantine churches.⁵ Yet the context of this particular composition does not seem to have been ecclesiastical, since its purpose was, apparently, to put the fear of God into the civil judiciary. The explicit mention of the dispensation of justice seems to indicate that the painting was in a hall where one of the judicial tribunals sat,⁶ or alternatively in a throne room where the emperor presided over the 'senate' in a judicial capacity. Alexios' references to his place on the side of the damned and to his personal purification by fire may simply be a dramatic expression of the emperor's well-known piety; on the other hand, it may indicate that he was actually portrayed in a penitential role, to the left of Christ. Certainly, there were aspects of his career which might have given him cause for anxiety as to his chances in the next life: the outrages committed by his troops when he entered Constantinople in 1081, his appropriation of church plate to pay for the Norman war, and his oppressive fiscal policy, all of

⁴ Matt. 7. 2.

⁵ Although the iconography of the scene may, initially, have borrowed heavily from imperial art: Grabar, *L'empereur*, 249-58. On the Last Judgment see B. Brenk, *Tradition und Neuerung in der Christlichen Kunst des ersten Jahrtausends* (Vienna 1966), 79-103.

⁶ On the judicial tribunals of this period see N.A. Oikonomides, "L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XI^e siècle (1025-1118)", *TM*, 6 (1976), 133-5.

which earned him clerical censure.⁷

The language of the poem is graphic and no doubt describes an actual mural. The thrones and open books refer to the iconography of the *hetoimasia*, the prepared throne, a standard element of the Middle Byzantine composition of the Last Judgment, although it must be noted that more than one throne is without precedent.⁸ Angels blow their trumpets to summon the dead from their tombs in the well-known scene in the eleventh-century Gospel book in Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. 74 (fig. 1), in which groups of pious souls pray to Christ, who is surrounded by the hosts of angels and apostles. There too, the stream of fire pours forth from Jesus and engulfs the damned at the right side of the viewer but the left side of Christ. Thus Kallikles describes the scene from the viewpoint of Jesus in accordance with the Biblical account in Matthew 25:31-46.

II (c. 1118) On the golden chamber (κουβούκλειον).

The gold has driven out the former cloud, beautifying the house, but weeping; or rather golden streams of imperial tears water a garden of mourning, this dwelling of a king a garden which has bloomed with the balsam of pain, the lilies of wailing, and the narcissi of sighs. Who sighs, and whom does he bewail? The child (bewails) his parent, the lord his lord, John, alas, mourns the great Alexios. I see sweet mourning and sorrowful joy, the parent both victorious and deceased. He (John) is divided, but inclines to grief. He sees the Celtic shield thrust aside, and rejoices but little, for the mingled grief for his father dulls the edge of his joy. The howling of the Paristrian dogs is

⁷ See especially P. Gautier, "Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis I^{er} Comnène," *REB*, 28 (1970), 5-55, Alexios' reputation for piety and penitence: Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, ed. B. Leib (Paris, 1937-45), I, 116-9; II, 45-8; Nicholas Kataskepenos, *La Vie de S. Cyrille le Philéote, moine byzantin*, ed. E. Sargologos, *Subsidia Hagiographica*, 39 (Brussels, 1964), J. Darrouzès, *Georges et Démétrios Tornikès, Lettres et discours* (Paris, 1970), 237-9.

⁸ See T. von Bogyay, "Hetoimasia," *RBK*, II (Stuttgart, 1971), cols. 1189-1202. In many cases the throne has a closed book on it, but the open book is also found, as for example in the bronze relief placed above the imperial door of H. Sophia in Constantinople. Cf. H. Kähler, *Die Hagia Sophia* (Berlin, 1967), pl. 62.

nowhere (to be heard), the twang of the Persian bowstring has died down, but these delights are painful to the lord of the earth now that the trophy-bearer is no more. All that is delightful hurts; thus the images of the fallen father seem but shades to the lord and child, whose mind is stung with the pricks of pain; his tears run like blood from his wounds. I see the sun weeping with him. Although he ran the course of a powerful giant, and although he was for all men the flame which warmed their life he has now given up his heat and his running. Approach, behold, and learn the truth. For seeing the bearer of light hidden, him, who was bright before all creation with the rays of virtues, depicted only as a shade and a mere image, he too is only a shadow and shape. Thus the vanishing of Alexios, the setting of the sun, has put two suns in darkness, the child who is king and the actual giver of light. (p. 338-40)

In this, as in the previous poem, there is a degree of literary sophistication which makes it more difficult than is often the case to visualize what was actually represented. However, the mention of gold ornament indicates gold mosaic, and the rest of the poem suggests that this served as a background for a pictorial cycle. The poet declares that he “sees” “sweet mourning and sorrowful joy”, Alexios “both victorious and deceased”, and later, the sun weeping with John. These statements, and the exhortation to “approach, behold, and learn the truth”, seem to indicate that the themes of the poem were all represented on the walls or ceiling of the Kouboukleion, and that the decoration thus comprised:

(a) a picture or a series of pictures showing Alexios triumphant over his Norman, Pecheneg, and Turkish enemies;

(b) a picture of Alexios deceased;

(c) representations of John and the sun in an attitude of mourning. No parallels for such a scheme are attested in surviving or lost monumental painting: triumphal iconography usually celebrated the exploits of a *reigning* emperor. But it would not have been inappropriate or unconventional for John to commemorate his father's achievements and register his grief in the same context. This was, after all, the function of a traditional literary *genre*, that of the *monodia* or funeral oration and an important early Byzantine panegyric, Corippus' *In laudem Justini Augusti minoris*, makes much of the way in which Justin II and Sophia mourned the late

emperor Justinian and celebrated his triumphs.⁹

The circumstances of John II's accession to the throne made it highly necessary for him to demonstrate his filial affection. Although designated beyond doubt as Alexios' successor during the latter's lifetime, his position as head of the family had been challenged by his sister Anna, his mother, and his brother-in-law Nikephoros Bryennios, who were all powerful influences on the old emperor. John was so apprehensive of a family plot against him that he deserted his father on his deathbed in order to secure control of the Great Palace. Consequently, Alexios "was abandoned by almost all his servants, with the result that apparently there was none to bathe his corpse with the ritual ablutions, and no imperial attire was available to those around him, so that his body might be ceremonially arrayed, nor was his corpse borne out in a way appropriate to an emperor — and all this not with an outsider, but with his own son having succeeded to his imperial estate, a son whom he had appointed to rule" (Zonaras). In spite of his precipitate action, John still faced hostility from some members of his family, who planned an abortive coup to put Nikephoros Bryennios on the throne.¹⁰

John II, therefore, at the beginning of his reign, needed to convince his subjects, especially those closest to him, that the dynastic legacy belonged to him, and not to other members of the family who had stood high in Alexios' affections; at the same time — indeed, before he could begin to carry conviction — he had to make up for his serious failure to honor his father on his death bed. A mosaic cycle prominently displayed in the palace to show him identifying with his father's achievement and lamenting his father's death would be a suitably comprehensive and permanent statement of his attitude. It is instructive to compare the statement made by his

⁹ I, 115ff, 226-95: edition and commentary by Averil Cameron (London, 1976).

¹⁰ Zonaras, *Epitomae Historiarum*, ed. Th. Büttner-Wobst, III, CSHB (Bonn, 1897), 747-8, 754-5, 761-5; Anna Comnena, ed. Leib, III, 238-9; Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. I. Bekker, CSHB (Bonn, 1835), 8-17; F. Chalandon, *Jean II Comnène (1118-1143) et Manuel I Comnène (1143-1180)* (Paris, 1912), 1-8; Darrouzès, *Georges et Démétrios Tornikès*, 268-9, n. 52.

chief rival in the affair, his sister Anna. Her *Alexiad* is closer to the genres of court rhetoric than any other piece of Byzantine historical writing, and Anna's professed intention to avoid singing her own praises or writing her father's encomium cannot obscure certain facts: the book is about one man, whom it celebrates as the incarnation of the imperial virtues and notably those which bring success in war; the author takes every opportunity to bring out her special relationship with Alexios; she describes his final illness and death in great detail, laying considerable emphasis on her own presence and distress, and concludes with a lament whose language, like that of Kallikles' poem, is highly reminiscent of monody. Anna's work breathes the spirit of family tension which hung over John II's accession to the throne; completed in scholarly seclusion thirty years after the event, it represents the loser's version of the official *Alexiad* which we glimpse in Kallikles' poem.¹¹

The scant details of the text offer little evidence for a reconstruction of the mosaics in the Kouboukleion, but the mention of John inclined to grief conforms to a centuries-old convention for denoting mourning.¹² The general scene of lamentation probably took the form of the standard Byzantine composition of one or more figures gathered about the bier of the deceased. Painters used this iconography for the Koimesis of the Virgin, as well as for most any other scene of death and mourning in religious and secular art. In the latter realm examples are readily found in the Madrid copy of the Chronicle of John Scylitzes. Recently N. Wilson has argued convincingly that the manuscript, heretofore considered to date to the Palaiologan era, was actually written in the mid or second half of the twelfth century at the Norman court in Palermo and that the

¹¹ Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, ed. Leib. I, 1-8; III, 229-242, especially 229, line 30-230, line 2: διττόν μοι τὸν ἀγῶνα τοῦ λόγου τῆς προκειμένης ὑπαγορευούσης ὑποθέσεως ἱστορεῖν ἅμα καὶ τραγωδεῖν τὰ συμπέσοντα τῷ αὐτοκράτορι, ἱστορεῖν μὲν τοὺς ἀγῶνας, εἰς μονωδίαν δὲ ἄγειν ὅποσα τὴν καρδίαν διεμασσήσατο. See also Chalandon, *op. cit.*, 16; G. Buckler, *Anna Comnena* (Oxford, 1929), 27-46; Darrouzès, *Georges et Démétrios Tornikès*, 303ff.

¹² In general for gestures of lamentation see H. Maguire, "The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art," *DOP*, 31(1977), 123-174, in which much is made of the correspondence between the literary and pictorial descriptions of grief.

source in part is an illustrated exemplar sent from Constantinople.¹³ Thus the Madrid codex provides important evidence for imperial iconography in the period of the Comneni. In the manuscript, the deaths of emperors, Patriarchs, or members of the imperial family are shown in accordance with the arrangement just described.¹⁴ In mural painting, a similar court funeral is depicted in the narthex of the thirteenth-century church of the Trinity at Sopoćani. There King Uroš, the founder of the church, had represented the death of his mother, Queen Anne. He stands behind the bier and inclines his head toward her in an expression of grief.¹⁵ This fresco, as well as others in the lowest zone of the narthex, stresses the dynastic continuity of the Serbian rulers in terms that recall Byzantine imperial iconography.

Among the works of the next Byzantine 'poet-laureate', Theodore Prodromos (c. 1100-c. 1156), is a poem concerning a portait of John II.

Edition: W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, historische Gedichte*, Wiener Byzantinische Studien, XI (Vienna, 1974), no. XLI, pp. 394-5.

III (1136-1143) Inscription on a painting painted for the emperor

¹³ N.G. Wilson, "The Madrid Skylitzes," *Scrittura e civiltà*, 2 (1978), 209-219. His argument is accepted by P. Canart, "Le livre grec en Italie méridionale sous les règnes Normand et Souabe: aspects matériels et sociaux," *Scrittura e civiltà*, 2 (1978), 147. The new publication of A. Grabar and M. Manoussacas, *L'illustration du manuscrit de Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Madrid* (Venice, 1979), has yet to reach us.

¹⁴ S.C. Estopañan, *Skylitzes Matritensis*, I (Madrid, 1965), figs. 98, 157, 313, 362, 364, 368.

¹⁵ R. Ljubinković, "Sur le symbolisme de l'histoire de Joseph du narthex de Sopoćani," *L'Art byzantin du XIII^e siècle, Symposium de Sopoćani* (Belgrade, 1967), 234-235, fig. 6. The same general composition is used as well to represent the death of Ivan Asen, the son of Tsar Ivan Alexander, in a fourteenth-century Slavic translation of the chronicle of Constantine Manasses, Rome, Bibl. Vat. Slavo 2. See I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), 162-3, fig. 103.

Kyr John Komnenos by his brother Kyr Isaakios.¹⁶

One father's seed united us; conception in a single womb combined us; the Porphyra¹⁷ has joined us from birth, O King and brother, and in the same swaddling clothes we two were blended in a single soul. We grew, and our bond grew with us; we became men and grew to manhood, as from a tiny spark to a great torch, and from a torch to a furnace. But - O turn of fate, O wheel of fortune - envy gained strength at our expense, and, alas, sundered our community of spirit. But, as was fitting, affection triumphed and all is well again between us, and I continually strain to see you always. But this being impossible for mortal nature, divided by time and place and the fluctuating affairs of fortune, I portray and depict you by the artist's hand, you whom I have engraved at the centre of my heart, in order that I may always see you and be with you, and refresh and divert my desire, staring at the copy as if it were the original. May I receive as much grace from God as I, O emperor, nurture affection for you.

The *sebastokrator* Isaac Komnenos, Alexios I's youngest son, unhesitatingly supported John II in 1118, but quarrelled with him in 1122, and spent the next fourteen years in exile. Although reconciled with his brother in 1136 — an occasion to which this poem evidently alludes — he remained suspect to John, and to Manuel after him. As renovator of the Chora monastery, founder of the Kosmosoteira monastery at Viros in Thrace, patron of Theodore Prodromos, and an author in his own right, Isaac was culturally one

¹⁶ The "Purple Chamber", the building in the Great Palace where in the Middle Byzantine period it was customary for the wife of the reigning emperor to give birth: see J. Ebersolt, *Le Grand Palais de Constantinople et le Livre de Cérémonies* (Paris, 1910), 148-9.

¹⁷ It is clear from the content of the poem that Isaac commissioned the painting for his own use, and therefore, as Hörandner suggests, this *lemma* is probably a later addition.

of the most influential members of the Comnenian family.¹⁸

IV (1161) Euthymios Malakes, *Oration to the emperor Manuel Komnēnos, delivered when the Sultan came to Constantinople*¹⁹

Edition: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Noctes Petropolitanae* (St. Petersburg, 1913)

In 1161 Kiliġ-Arslan II, Seljukid sultan of Konya (Iconium), hard-pressed by rivalry with his brothers, decided to seek the friendship of the Byzantine emperor and came to Constantinople. Manuel made most of the fact that the sultan was his favoured but dependent guest, taking the opportunity to overwhelm Kiliġ-Arslan with his generosity and extract promises of political concessions in return, and to impress upon his own subjects the extent of his diplomatic triumph.²⁰ The present oration, delivered at the time, fully expresses the significance which the Byzantine government attached to the event. Using a standard convention of imperial panegyric, the author compares his oration to an image of the emperor — whose deeds themselves constitute icons of triumph, superior to the images of pagan heroes and gods, because they are celebrated in every town in the *oikoumene*. He continues:

But rather, let me leave the false gods and delineate the good

¹⁸ For Isaac's political career, see Choniates, 42-3; John Cinnamus, *Epitome Rerum*, ed. A. Meinecke, CSHB (Bonn, 1836), 32-3, 53-4 - this work has been translated by C.M. Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus* (New York, 1976), with reference to the page-numbers of the Bonn edition; Chalandon, *Jean II Comnène et Manuel I Comnène*, 83-5, 216. Prodromos composed three poems for him, including this one: ed. Hörandner, nos. XL-XLII, pp. 390-8. Isaac as author: J.J. Rizzo, *Isaak Sebastokrator's Περί τῆς τῶν κακῶν ὑποστάσεως* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1971). The Kosmosoteira monastery: L. Petit, "Typikon du monastère de la Kosmosotira près d'Aenos (1152)," *IRAIK*, 13 (1908), 1-61. The Chora Monastery: Paul A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, 1 (New York, 1966), 8-13.

¹⁹ On the authorship and date, see J. Darrouzès, "Notes sur Euthyme Tornikès, Euthyme Malakès, et Georges Tornikès," *REB*, 23 (1965), 156-8.

²⁰ Cinnamus, 204-8; Choniates, 152-8; Chalandon, 462-5.

emperor by drawing an analogy, which is much more natural and appropriate, with the true and good God. Just as Christ the Saviour of the world, although alone as liberator of all Christendom, is depicted in every town and is glorified in splendid festivals befitting his divinity, every icon displaying one of the miracles by which we are saved, one showing his unique birth, another his fearful passion, another his ineffable resurrection, and the rest of the mysteries of our salvation; in the same way my emperor, the imitation of my Christ, is one and (yet) shared over all the earth. The towns bear his images as teachers of the virtues by which he has saved the earthly order, and one may see him represented here as a founder of cities, there as a besieger bringing his brilliant triumphs to fulfillment, making captives of the foreigners, freeing those under their yoke; in one town laying the first foundations and giving the town its name; in another surrounding it with a crown of walls and raising fallen towers, and restoring to the town its lost name - these things are festive occasions, the towns leap (for joy), and gifts come to the emperor from all over the world. (p. 173)

Malakes here develops the common *topos* that the emperor is the image of Christ into a rare analogy between imperial and Christian iconography. The analogy is interesting as an explicit statement by a Byzantine author to the effect that representations of the emperor's deeds, while they may narrate specific incidents, are primarily didactic expressions of universal truths about the emperor, just as icons of Christ express the theological significance of events in his life. At the same time, the analogy causes difficulty in interpreting the passage as a piece of evidence for imperial art. Exactly what was represented, and where? Since we know that the Birth, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ were represented in every church, it is logical to infer from Malakes' analogy that every provincial town was decorated with a full pictorial cycle showing the emperor as founder, besieger, victor, and restorer. Yet the fact that Malakes contrasts what happens in one town with what happens in another suggests that he is referring to pictures of the emperor as being represented in each town performing only the action or actions appropriate to that town. If this is so, what of towns which have not benefited from restoration, liberation, or refoundation? The problem is further complicated by another passage, earlier in the oration. Here

Malakes lists all the wonders that Manuel had accomplished in Asia Minor, and that the Sultan must have seen while passing through Byzantine territory on his way to Constantinople. He asks the sultan:

Did you see cities on the plains? Did you see lofty fortresses on the mountains? Did you see imperial pictures set up on them? These all show my emperor who raised the fortifications in a day. (p. 169)

This passage would seem to suggest that Malakes was seeking to impress upon the Sultan the examples of towns which he had seen and which, of course, lay in territory that Byzantium had recently reconquered from the Seljuks. Other evidence, indeed, suggests that Manuel's work of urban restoration was mainly confined to Asia Minor.^{20a} Moreover, this passage does not refer to pictures showing the emperor in action, but to mere imperial portraits. It may be, therefore, that Malakes' analogy boils down to the banal statement that imperial portraits were to be found in every town.

It is possible, in any case, that whatever the content and distribution of the provincial pictures in question, Malakes drew his analogy with reference to a cycle of depictions much closer at hand, which he and his audience were more familiar, and which the Sultan could perhaps see as he listened to the oration. The oration must have been delivered in one of the throne rooms of the Great Palace, where Manuel entertained his Turkish guest. We know that Manuel constructed a *triklinos* here, which he decorated with mosaics depicting his victories; this was certainly complete by 1166.²¹ If already built in 1162, it could well have served as the scene for at least one of the occasions when Manuel tried to impress the sultan with his power and wealth. Kinnamos, referring to Manuel's Italian 'victories' of 1155, mentions that the captured towns were recorded *by name* on the walls of this throne room: one is reminded here of the

^{20a} Choniates, 194-5; W. Regel, *Fontes rerum byzantinorum* (St. Petersburg, 1892-1917), 29-33; *Eustathii opuscula*, ed. T.L.F. Tafel (Frankfurt, 1832) 208; Cinnamus, 63.

²¹ See P. Magdalino, "Manuel Komnenos and the Great Palace," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 4 (1978), 101-2, 106-8.

pictures described by Malakes as showing the emperor giving new towns their names, or restoring names to others. Another imperial oration of Manuel's reign describes the Serbian *zupan*, Nemanja, looking at pictures of Manuel's victories, when Nemanja came to Constantinople to make his submission to the emperor.²²

Poems from the Marcianus gr. Z. 524

This thirteenth-century codex contains a large collection of anonymous verses which constitute a major body of evidence for works of art, among them several imperial representations, commissioned by the emperor Manuel I and his court circle. The material presented below supplements that available in the partial edition by Lampros and the translations by Mango.

Edition: Sp. Lampros, "Ο Μαρκιανός Κώδιξ 524", *Νέος Έλληνομνήμων*, 8 (1911), 3-57, 123-92. fol 37^{r-v}

V. (post 1150) On the pictures of the emperors Kyr Alexios...

The lustre of wealth and gold, and the gleaming brightness of many kinds of stone, display the splendour of the golden building. But the inner charm which comes from these is not as great as that which derives from the depiction of images on the outside. For John renowned in the dignities of *protosebastos* and *protovestiaros*²³ (whom Andronikos the *sebastokrator*, flower of the Porphyra, sired), demonstrating the affection which he had in his heart for the imperial lords, founders of the dynasty, depicts their figures in front of these gates, to increase of beauty, as a great adornment. Here to be seen is Alexios Komnenos, the king who crowns the Crown with victories; then the scion of the Porphyra John, who further increased his

²² Regel, *Fontes*, 43-4; Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 225.

²³ More information about John and his family is to be found in Cinnamus, 126ff; Choniates, 135-6. The *sebastokrator* Andronikos was a son of John II who predeceased his father; John was therefore Manuel's nephew. Manuel granted him his titles to console him for having lost an eye in a tournament (1149/1150). See also P. Gautier, "Michel Italikos Lettres et discours," *Archives de l'Orient Chrétien*, XIV (Paris 1972), 281-2

father's glory, from the eastern ends of the earth to where the sun sets. Next see the lord Manuel, born in the Porphyra, frightful to all barbarians, to whom bow down Dalmatians, Persians, Scyths, the land of Antioch, the Cilicians, and Aleppo. Stranger, you (are to) consider that the building boasts all its splendour, all its great charm, from this source. Behold here the measure of the affection which the purple flower's offshoot who depicts these things bears towards the emperor Manuel. For, showing the servitude and incomparable loyalty which he cherishes towards him, he falls at his feet even in representation, and thus portrayed appears to speak as follows:

"My father simply brought me into the world, O mightiest of emperors, glory of the crown, but you have looked after me from my tender years, and created me anew in a mystical way; as a guardian bringing me up nobly, adorning and fortifying my character with the pursuit of arms, teaching me every rule of generalship, unstopping all the fountains of benevolence, never tired of being my benefactor, giving me double honours - in a word, (you are) revealed as a second God to me. Since I have not the power to render fitting gratitude, I pray that the solar cycles of your reign may be as David called the days of heaven.²⁴ May you have the monarchy of the land and seas, enjoying a full span of longevity; may you leave to your child the Crown and the state, that the line of your family may be woven longer still; and may you at the end, together with the supreme king and Word, reign over the Kingdom which has no end.

This is one of several poems in the anthology referring to portrait: of Manuel commissioned by various of his subjects, mostly those with important positions in the hierarchy, to decorate their house: and religious foundations.²⁵ The image in question was of a type, the dynastic group, that seems to have been quite widespread in Manuel's reign, and which reflects the strong sense, shared also with his father, of the dynastic context to which his own achievement:

²⁴ Psalm 88 (89): 29.

²⁵ Cf. fols. 46r, 108r, 180r; Cinnamus, 266 (Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire* 224-5), who says that such commissions were "the custom among men placed in authority".

belonged.²⁶ It is interesting, however, that none of the twelfth-century portrait groups for which we have evidence include Isaac I; also no two are exactly identical.

The portraits alluded to here were evidently displayed on the wall outside the gates of John's home, no doubt in Constantinople and apparently showed John in prostration before Manuel and his imperial ancestors. Proskynesis before the emperor as a sign of respect and not merely indicative of military defeat was a common part of court ceremonial but is rarely seen in surviving art.²⁷ One possible parallel is a miniature in a copy of the Homilies of St. John Chrysostomos in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, Coislin 79. On f. 2v an emperor, now designated as Nicephoros Botaniates, stands between St. John Chrysostomos and the Archangel Michael. The tiny figure below, who kneels before the emperor, may be the scribe or the painter of the manuscript.²⁸ Although the iconography of the miniature has some affinities with the group portraits commissioned by the protosebastos John, the latter probably would have been accorded greater prominence in the pictures made for his own house.

fol. 107 † εἰς εἰκόνα ἔχουσιν ἱστορηθέντα τὸν βασιλέα, <καὶ> τὴν

²⁶ A sense of dynastic solidarity is frequently expressed in panegyrical literature of the period: e.g. Regel, *Fontes*, 29, 66; Tafel, *Eustathii opuscula*, 197; Prodrornos, ed. Hörandner, XIII, lines 47-8 (p. 266) - αὐξάνου, σχῆπτρον Κομνηνῶν, εὐρύνου θεῖον γένος γένος χρυσοῦν ἡρωικὸν βασιλικὸν καὶ μέγα XVIII, lines 13ff (p. 303). The theme of the dynastic portrait group was later used by the Grand Comneni of Trebizond, and the Nemanjić dynasty of Serbia; cf. Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 183, 252-3; S. Ćurčić, "The Nemanjić family tree in the light of the ancestral cult in the church of Joachim and Anna at Studenica," *ZRVI*, 14/15 (1973), 191-5; N.A. Oikonomides, "The Chancery of the Grand Komnenoi: Imperial Tradition and Political Reality," *Ἀρχαῖον Πόντου*, 35 (1979) 322-4.

²⁷ A. Culter, *Transfigurations, Studies in the Dynamics of Byzantine Iconography* (University Park, Pa., 1975), 69-70, I. Spatharakis, "The Proskynesis in Byzantine art. A Study in Connection with a Nomisma of Andronicus II Paleologue," *Bulletin Antieke Beschaving*, 49 (1974), 190-203. Proskynesis as a gesture of submission to a victorious ruler is more common, and this is the sense of the miniature in Venice. Bibl. Marc. Gr. 17, f. 3 of the Emperor Basil II with barbarians prostrate at his feet. (cf. Spatharakis, *Portrait*, pl. 6)

²⁸ Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 112, fig. 72.

δέσποιναν εὐλογουμένην παρὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ

† Κάνταῦθα τέρμα τῆς προφητείας βλέπω
 ἢν ὁ βλέπων προεῖπεν Ἰερεμίας,²⁹
 οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἄρτι προουλαλεῖ τῷ πλησίον
 καὶ ἐκδιδάσκων γνῶθι τὸν βασιλέα
 πάντες γὰρ ἐγνώκασιν αὐτοῦ τὸ κράτος
 μικρῶν ὁπάντων μέχρι καὶ τῶν ἐν τέλει.
 οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοι τῶν μεγίστων ἐν βίῳ
 μεῖζους χαρίτων εἰσφέρουσι τοὺς τρόπους,
 στηλογραφοῦντες ἐν διηρημένοις τόποις,
 λόγοις διαδήλοντες αὐτοῦ τὰ κράτη,
 κοινὸν καλοῦντες ἀγαθὸν τῶν Αὐσόνων,
 σωτῆρα, ῥύστην, φύλακα, σκέπην, βάσιν,
 ἄλλον Θεὸν πλάττοντα δευτέραν πλάσιν,
 τὴν συντριβὴν τῶν ἐκδρομῶν τῶν βαρβάρων.
 Ἰωάννης δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου Θύτης
 Χρυσοφορέτης ἐξ ἐπωνύμου γένους
 κὰν εὐτελὴς ἢ καὶ μικρὸς τὰ πρὸς τύχην,
 πίσκει πόθον σύγκρατον αὐτοῦ δεικνύων
 δὴν πρὸς τὸν αὐτάνακτα Μανουὴλ τρέφει,
 τὸν πορφυρόχροον τῆς Νέας Ῥώμης στύλον,
 χρώμασι τυποῖ δουλικῶς τοῦτον γράφων
 καὶ τὴν ἄνασσαν Μαρίαν συνεγγράφων
 Ἀντιόχου γῆς πρὶν φέρουσας τὸ κράτος
 καὶ νῦν δι' αὐτοῦ κοσμίῳ παντὸς κύκλου
 γραφαῖς ἀφώνοις κεκρατῶς τὰ τοῦ πόθου
 οὗς ὁ κρατῶν γῆς, οὐρανοῦ παντοκράτωρ
 συνῆψε εἰς ἓν καὶ λέχος καὶ τὸ στέφος
 ἄμφω συνάπτων προσφυῶς καὶ παγκάλως
 ἐπεύχεται δὲ τοῦ Θρόνου μὲν ἡμέρας
 ὅσας ὁ Δαυὶδ οὐρανοῦ ψάλλων λέγει,
 υἱὸν δ' ἅπ' ἄμφοιν ὥσπερ ἐκ κήπου ῥόδον
 ἐκπορφυρῶσαι σπαργάνοις τὴν πορφύραν
 καὶ <ξ>χειν παρ' αὐτοῦ τὸ στέφος κληρουχίαν
 γῆρα λιπόντων ἐν βαθεῖ τὰ τοῦ κράτους.

VI (1161-1169) On an icon which has the emperor represented, and the empress blessed by Christ

²⁹ The allusions are presumably to Jer. 26, 16; 36, 34.

Here I see fulfillment of the prophecy which Jeremiah²⁹ the seer spake - for "none had uttered to his neighbour" - teaching, "Know the king". All have known his power, from lesser men to those of rank. Those who are great in the world contribute greater expressions of their gratitude, portraying him in various places, advertising his power in words, calling him the common good of the Ausonians, saviour, liberator, guardian, shelter, foundation, another God making a second Creation, the destruction of barbarian incursions. John, priest of God the Word, of the family of Chrysophorites, although low and insignificant in his lot, showing the affection mixed with loyalty which he bears towards the emperor Manuel, the purple-hued pillar of the New Rome, slavishly portrays him in colours. He also portrays the empress Maria, who formerly held sway over the land of Antioch, and now through him (Manuel) of every worldly orbit. Containing his emotion in voiceless representations, he depicts those whom the Pantokrator, ruler of earth and heaven, has joined decorously and splendidly in one bed and one crown. He wishes that the days of their throne may be as many as David, in the psalm, numbers the days of heaven; that the Porphyra may blossom in swaddling clothes with a son for them, like a rose from a garden; and that the crown may find inheritance from him, when in ripe old age they leave their power.

This poem and the painting to which it refers must have been executed between 1161, when Manuel married Maria of Antioch, and 1169, when Alexios II was born.³⁰ The text is interesting as evidence of the extent to which imperial portraiture under Manuel was commissioned by his subjects, and as an uninhibited statement of the traditional, but extreme, principle that the emperor was God on earth. A portrait of the imperial couple survives in a Vatican manuscript, gr. 1176, f. IIr (fig. 2). The text is of a church council of 1166 at which Manuel presided. He subsequently took a great interest in publicizing its findings on carved marble panels originally set up in Hagia Sophia and recently rediscovered in a nearby türbe. The Vatican version is thought to be an original or the original

³⁰ Chalandon, 491, 523.

copy,³¹ and thus its portraits of Manuel and Maria provide good evidence for reconstructing the contemporary panel.

In addition, one has to imagine the inclusion of Christ blessing either the empress only, as the title would indicate, or more probably both figures. The benediction might have taken one of two forms — either Christ gesturing in the act of blessing or else actually placing his hands on the crowns of the couple. The latter iconography can, of course, signify coronation, but it was also used to express the blessing of Jesus upon the emperor and empress, as in another miniature in Paris, Bibl. Nat. Coislin 79 (fig. 3). In the latter the accompanying verses specify that Christ is blessing the couple,³² and the same is true of a similar scene on the cover of an ivory casket in the Palazzo Venezia.³³ The verb employed to describe Christ's action in these two preserved works is the same used in the above text.

VII fol. 108v (1143-1180) On the conch of the newly built throne-room (τρίκλινος)³⁴ on the hill of the Blachernae.

In you have I securely laid the foundation of this imperial and

³¹ On the Manuscript see Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 208-210 with further bibliography to which may be added P. Classen, "Die Komnenen und die Kaiserkrone des Westens," *Journal of Medieval History*, 3 (1977), 214-20. The inscription, mentioned by Classen, was first published by C. Mango, "The Conciliar Edict of 1166," *DOP*, 17(1963), 315-30.

³² Quoted in Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 108.

³³ A. Goldschmidt and K. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.-XII. Jahrhunderts*, I (Berlin, 1930), 63, pl. LXX. Because of the generalized or symbolical significance at times of Christ placing his hands on the crown of rulers, it is questionable if such images, in the absence of other evidence, should be considered to be the representation of a specific coronation, as has been argued in the past by various scholars. A case in point is provided by a Psalter of c. 1059 in Rome, Vat. gr. 752 in which this composition appears three times. In two miniatures Saul is shown placing his hands on the crowns of David and Michael. In one instance (f. 2v) the accompanying inscription states that Saul crowns them; in the other (f. 449r) it says that he blesses them. See E.T. DeWald, *The Illustrations in Manuscripts of the Septuagint, Volume III, Psalms and Odes, Part 2: Vaticanus Graecus 752* (Princeton, 1942), 4, 41, pls. IV, LIII.

³⁴ This is the correct reading, not τρικλιόνου as proposed by Lampros.

splendid house, O Maiden, living palace of the universal King, and I also represent the figures of my parents, so that I may see my lamented, if only in shadows.³⁵

Two emperors are known to have built throne-rooms at the Blachernae Palace, Alexios I and Manuel I,³⁶ and given the poem's place in this collection, the latter is likely to be the ruler who commissioned the work. If the 'conch' reflects a structural feature of the building, we probably have to envisage this as a basilica with an apse at the end where the emperor was enthroned.³⁷ The use of the first person suggests that the poem was inscribed on the mosaic. This would seem to have depicted a kind of *deesis*, with the Virgin in the centre of the semi-dome, flanked by the emperor and his parents, or simply by the latter. The composition calls to mind the simple, spare decoration of the apses of early churches, such as that at S. Agnese in Rome from c. 625 in which three standing figures, the patron saint and the two Popes, are evenly spaced on a gold ground.³⁸ Closer in

³⁵ For 'shadows' see also text II above. The words *σκιὰ* and *τύπος* have a long history in Greek literature. Applied to iconography, they tend to be used in a negative sense, to express the insubstantial approximation of the image rather than its true likeness to the original. Cf. Canon 82 of the Council in Trullo (Quinsext).

³⁶ Sources of the Palaiologan period contain several references to the *triklinos* of Alexios: Pachymeres (CSHB), I, 263; II, 89, 188; Gregoras, 783-4, 898; Mansi, XXVI, 191. This was built by the end of 1094: P. Gautier, "Le synode des Blachernes (fin 1094)," *REB*, 29 (1971), 220. Manuel's throne room is mentioned by Choniates, 269, and Benjamin of Tudela: ed. and tr. M.N. Adler, *The Itinerary of Tudela* (London, 1907), 13.

³⁷ The analogy between the cult of the emperor and that of Christ was carried into ceremonial architecture: O. Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser-und Reichsidee nach ihrer Gestaltung im höfischen Zeremoniell* (Darmstadt, 1956), 50ff. A striking illustration of the parallel is provided by the description of a dream in which the monk Cyril Philéotes is said to have seen the imperial campaign tent of Alexios I "in the form of a church": Kataskepenos, *Vie de S. Cyrille le Philéote*, ed. Sargologos, 154.

³⁸ G. Matthiae, *Mosaici medioevali delle chiese di Roma*, II (Rome, 1967), fig. 90. On the importance of the monument for Byzantine painting see E. Kitzinger, "Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm," *Berichte zum XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress*, IV, 1 (Munich, 1958), 17.

date would be the imperial portraits in the south gallery of H. Sophia, where in one case John II, his wife Irene, and his son Alexios are arranged on either side of Mary and the Christ child.³⁹ The Virgin also stands in the center of an imperial couple and their children in a miniature in Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. 922, representing Constantine X Ducas and his family.⁴⁰

VIII fol. 112v. † εἰς τὸ καινουργηθὲν κουβούκλειον ἐν τῷ κατὰ τὰς Βλαχέρνας κουβουκλείῳ

† Τί τὸν μέγαν ἄνακτα τυπῶν ζωγράφε
 μέσον δ' ἐπ' αὐτῆς τῆς στοᾶς διαγράφεις
 τὸ πορφυραυγὲς κοσμοῦ κέντρον κύκλου
 μακρὰν διῆστας ἀρετῶν τὰς εἰκόνας
 ὡς ἐντὸς αὐτὸς ἀδιαστάτας ἔχει;
 ἀλλ' εὖγε ταῦτα τῆς ἀληθείας τύποι,
 τῷ γὰρ κρατίστῳ Μανουὴλ συνεγγράφεις
 τοῦ χρυσοπάστου κυκλόθεν ταύτας δόμους,
 ἔμψυχον αὐτῶν ἀρετῶν οἶκον κρίνων
 φρουροῦντα ταύτας παρθένους ὥσπερ κόρας.
 συνεννοεῖν καὶ τι μοι πλέον δίδως
 ὅπως περιστήλουσιν αὐτὸν ἐν μέσῳ
 συνεμπλακεῖσαι δακτύλοις ἀκηράτοις
 καὶ φύλακες γὰρ εἰσιν αὐτῷ τοῦ κράτους
 ὑψοῦσιν αὐτὸν μέχρις ἀντύγων στόλου
 ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς ὥσπερ εἰσδεδεγμένοι,
 ὑφ' ὧν τροποῦται Δαλμάτας, Πέρσας, Δάκας,
 καὶ βάρβαρον πᾶν καὶ παράσπονδον γένος

(?1165) On the newly built *kouboukleion* in the *kouboukleion* at the Blachernae

Why, O artist, in portraying the great king, do you depict him in the

³⁹ V. Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin, 1967), figs. 289-92.

⁴⁰ Spatharakis, *Portait*, fig. 68. Here Mary places her hands on the crowns of the emperor and empress, but there is no reason to think that the Virgin performed a similar act in the palace mosaic.

middle of a stoa, the purple-rayed centre of the world's orbit, and set at a distance the images of the virtues which he has inseparable within him? But these are rightly representations of the truth, for you portray them along with the most mighty Manuel, around the gilded house, seeing (in him) a living habitation of these very virtues, guarding these virgins as if they were his daughters. You also give me occasion to see another meaning in the way that they surround him, entwined by undefiled fingers. For they are guardians of his state; they raise him to the railings of the chariot, as if acclaiming him above their heads. Through them he triumphs over Dalmatians, Persians, Dacians, and every barbarian and faithless race.

This representation of the emperor as the incarnation of the virtues corresponds to a standard *topos* of panegyric and "Speculum Principis" literature and belongs to an artistic tradition which was also common to the medieval west.⁴¹ In Byzantine literature, a close parallel to this poem can be found in some verses addressed by Theodore Prodromos to John II;⁴² in art, we have evidence for the same theme being expressed in one other painting of Manuel's reign and one in the palace of Andronikos II Palaiologos.⁴³

⁴¹ Cf. A. Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art* (London, 1939).

⁴² Prodromos, ed. Hörandner, Poem V, exhorting the emperor (John II) to enter the city on the triumphal chariot which has been made for the occasion: Lines 54 ff (p. 215): ἔχεις μὲν ἕτερον ἐντὸς ἄρμα λαμπρὸν καὶ θεῖον
τὰς τέσσαρας τῶν ἀρετῶν τὰς γενικὰς καὶ πρώτας
δικαιοσύνην φρόνησιν ἀνδρείαν σωφροσύνην
δι' ὧν καὶ μέχρ' οὐρανῶν αὐτῶν ἐπελαφρίζη
καὶ φθάσεις εἰς τὰς ἀντὺγας τὰς ὑπερουρανίους

⁴³ *Cod. Marc. Gr.*, 524, fol. 22v; E. Miller, *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, II (Paris, 1857), 124; Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 225, 247. Virtues are found decorating the canon tables of two twelfth-century Gospel books in Melbourne and Venice. See H. Buchthal, "An illuminated Byzantine Gospel Book of about 1100 A.D.," *Special Bulletin of the National Gallery of Victoria* (Melbourne, 1961), 4, 8. The Venice manuscript, *Bibl. Marc. gr. Z. 540*, may date to the mid twelfth century and thus is approximately contemporary with these murals from the reign of Manuel I. The imaginary mural depiction of the four virtues which Eustathios Makrembolites describes in great detail in *Hysmine and Hysminias* no doubt faithfully reflects works of art familiar to the author, who is thought to have lived in the mid-to-late 12th century: R. Hercher, *Erotici scriptores graeci*, II (Leipzig, 1859), 170-4; H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I (Munich, 1978), 137-41.

The use of the words κύκλος, κυκλόθεν, and the mentions of Manuel being represented above and in the middle of the virtues suggest that the composition occupied a domed ceiling, with the emperor in the middle and the allegorical figures, such as Justice, Fortitude, Prudence, and Temperance, surrounding him — presumably not too far distant from each other, since they appear to have been shown holding hands. The reference to the conquest of Dalmatia probably makes 1165 a *terminus post quem* for the poem if not for the mosaic.⁴⁴

The mural as described has no close parallels in surviving imperial art. The general notion of an emperor accompanied by personifications of virtues was, however, well established by the reign of Manuel. Ancient Roman emperors were often represented in the company of virtues, such iconography being a common feature of Roman coinage from Vespasian to Diocletian. Virtues were gradually eliminated from the coins of Christian emperors with Victoria, the last to remain, finally being replaced by an angel.⁴⁵ In the Middle Byzantine era an important example of what Katzenellenbogen calls the “retinue” arrangement of virtues is encountered in Coislin 79, where the enthroned emperor is flanked by Truth and Justice (fig. 4).⁴⁶ The same scheme is employed for the seated Christ in Vat. Urb. gr. 2, and there Jesus, as the heavenly Lord who places his hands on the crowns of John II and Alexios, is accompanied by Mercy and Justice (fig. 5).⁴⁷ In many instances, religious and secular representations of majesty were interchangeable, and for this reason the miniature of David, dressed as an emperor and flanked by Wisdom and Prophecy in the tenth-century Paris Psalter (Bibl. Nat. gr. 139, fig. 6), functions both as a logical introductory image for David’s Psalms and as an allegory of Byzantine kingship intended for the son of Constantine VII, as

⁴⁴ Chalandon, 485.

⁴⁵ H. Mattingly, “The Roman ‘Virtues’,” *Harvard Theological Review*, 30 (1937), 103-17. Prof. K. Shelton kindly furnished this reference.

⁴⁶ Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories*, 29-30; Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 110-11.

⁴⁷ Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 79-83 with literature.

Buchthal has so successfully demonstrated.⁴⁸

This equivalence of the earthly and celestial court offers the potential for visualizing the mosaic in the Blachernae in terms of surviving religious art, such as the mosaics in the dome of the palace chapel of the Norman rulers in Palermo (fig. 7). Although the building's basilical plan is Western and its painted ceiling Islamic, the mosaics of the Cappella Palatina are the work of Greek artists, and the dome, dating to 1143, shows a bust of the Pantocrator surrounded by a ring of angels and archangels, the members of his imperial retinue.⁴⁹ Their close proximity to each other perhaps suggests a parallel to Manuel's virtues with their interlocking hands. Lastly in this context one other vault should be mentioned, even if its relevance is less certain. The central dome of the cathedral of San Marco in Venice depicts the Ascension of Christ at its summit with the usual ring of Apostles and the Virgin around the outer edges. More exceptional are the sixteen personifications of virtues placed below, between the windows of the drum of the cupola. According to Demus,⁵⁰ these figures date to the end of the twelfth century and are western in inspiration, so that the agreement in position with the outer circle of virtues in the imperial palace in Constantinople may only be accidental.

Finally, a precedent for the entwined fingers of the virtues appears in the eleventh-century Psalter in Rome, Bibl. Vat. gr. 752.⁵¹ As a prefatory illustration to the first Ode of Moses, celebrating the Israelites' triumph over the Egyptians at the Red Sea, the illuminator depicted Miriam and a group of women dancing in a circle around a company of musicians. He chose not an illusionistic scene of a crowd

⁴⁸ H. Buchthal, "The Exaltation of David," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 37 (1974), 330-3.

⁴⁹ O. Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily* (New York, 1950), 25-6, 38-9.

⁵⁰ O. Demus, *Die Mosaiken von San Marco in Venedig 1100-1300* (Baden bei Wien, 1935), 24-5, fig. 12.

⁵¹ DeWald, *Vaticanus Graecus 752*, 41-42. Illustrated in color in *Quinto Centenario della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana 1475-1975* (Vatican, 1975), pl. XI.

but an abstract arrangement of a ring of women linking their arms and framing a circular field of instrumentalists who are seen from a more normal perspective. This miniature and the above examples thus show Byzantine artists creating appropriate visual solutions to compositional problems similar to what is described in the text. The common propensity of such painters was to illustrate new subject matter by means of traditional formulas, and probably the mosaicists employed by the palace were no exception.

IX fol. 120r (1131-1180) On the things depicted in the holy monastery of the Holy Trinity by the Bosporos (κατὰ τὸ Στενόν).

Many are the vines of your donations which you have planted in the paradise of this monastery, O emperor, with the red signatures of your hand, and you have dug for us a wine-vat of grace by fencing these in with golden bulls. And now, as we harvest the grapes of rejoicing, we in joy depict you the planter and your beloved *mystikos* Nikephoros, faithful to both God and your state, through whom as intermediary and instigator you were found ready to plant.

This is the first of two poems in the anthology written to be inscribed in this monastery, whose existence is not otherwise attested. The second poem reveals that it was founded in 1130-1 by one Symeon. It is highly likely that Manuel was the emperor represented, since at least two of his *mystikoi* were called Nikephoros.⁵²

X fol. 180r. (c. 1171) On representations of the famed emperor John, his son Kyr Manuel, and the latter's son Kyr Alexios

Grandfather, father, child, emperors of New Rome, whom you see depicted here, O stranger, constitute a divinely woven golden cord

⁵² Nikephoros Serblias: *Ioannis Tzetzae Epistulae*, ed. P.A. Leone (Leipzig, 1972), no. 18, p. 31; Nikephoros Borbno: *PG*, 140, col. 177. A *mystikos* Nikephoros refounded the monastery of Elaiobomoi or Elegmoi in Bithynia before 1162: R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975), 146.

encompassing the ends of the earth, articulating all aspects of its government, bending the necks of gentiles and barbarians. These three trees are of the Porphyra, covering and refreshing those beneath them with the shady foliage of their benefactions. John the scepter-bearer of the Ausonians who increased the fame of his father and, much more, the emperor Manuel, at whom every satrap, king, prince and count, the whole of Rus, the Egyptian Nile have trembled, as at one invincible in mind and strength. To whose God-given monarchy may Alexios, his son and fulfillment of the series, succeed after the revolution of thrice-old suns.

The *terminus post quem* for this picture is the elevation of Alexios II, born in 1169, to the rank of co-emperor in 1171, and it may well have been commissioned in honour of that occasion, when the emperor's subjects swore an oath of allegiance to the heir-presumptive.⁵³ It is curious that Alexios I was not represented in this instance — perhaps in order to keep the number of figures at a mystical three; perhaps to emphasize that the other male line of descent from Alexios I, represented by the relative whom Manuel had most reason to fear, his cousin Andronikos, had been excluded from the succession.⁵⁴

XI. fol. 181r. † ἐπὶ τοῖς εἰκονίσμασι τοῦ βασιλέως, τοῦ μὲν Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ συλλαλοῦντος αὐτῷ πρὸς τὸ οὐς, τοῦ δὲ Ἀγίου Πνεύματος ἐν εἵδει περιστερᾶς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ κατερχομένου, τῶν δὲ ἁγίων ἀποστόλων Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου, καὶ τῶν ἁγίων πατριαρχῶν τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου, τοῦ Θεολόγου καὶ ἑτέρων ἀρχιερέων ἐπιδιδόντων αὐτῷ τόμους τῶν χρήσεων

† σὺ μὲν ὦ Παῖ τῷ βασιλεῖ προστάλει
 ὃ δ' ἂν πρὸς οὐς ἤκουσε κηρύττειν θέλει
 ὡς εἷς μὲν ἐσὺ πλὴν φύσεις σώξεις δις
 ἀμφοῖν ἀμίκτους εἷς ὑπόστασιν μίαν,
 καὶ σὺ δὲ Πνεῦμα χάριν ὑψόθεν δίδου
 καὶ σὴν γὰρ ἐκπόρευσιν ἐκ Πατρὸς μόνου

⁵³ Choniates, 220-1; Chalandon, 212.

⁵⁴ See *infra*.

πιστοῖς διδάσκει, καὶ μὲν ἀρχὴν σέβειν.
 Χριστοῦ μαθητῶν, ἱεράρχων ἀκρότης
 πάρεστιν ἰδοῦ καὶ προτείνεται τόμους
 πλήρεις ἀκριβῶν ὀρθοδόξων δογμάτων
 τοῦτους Μανουὴλ Αὐσονοκράτορ δέχου
 καὶ δόγμα πᾶν ἐκφυλὸν αὐτοῖς ἐκτρέπου

XI (c. 1166) On representations of the emperor, our Lord Jesus Christ speaking in his ear, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descending from heaven, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and the holy patriarchs Chrysostom, the Theologian⁵⁵ and other bishops giving him tomes of quotations.

You, O Child, speak to the emperor; he wishes to proclaim what his ear has heard, how You are one although You have two natures, both unmixed in one person. And you, O Spirit, give grace from above, for he teaches the faithful to revere your procession from the Father alone, and your one origin. Behold, the most exalted of Christ's disciples and hierarchs are present and proffer tomes full of proper orthodox doctrines. Receive these, Manuel, ruler of the Ausonians, and reject all teachings which are foreign to them.

This painting was probably occasioned by Manuel's involvement in one of the doctrinal controversies of his reign, the most significant of which occurred in 1166, when the emperor took a special interest because of his current negotiations with the papacy and laid great emphasis on his role as arbiter of orthodoxy.⁵⁶ In this, as in the preceeding poem, the context of the picture is not mentioned, but since both pictures conveyed important political propaganda and engaged the talents of a poet whose works were valued by later generations, it may be supposed that they were imperial commissions for monumental display.

⁵⁵ I.e. St. Gregory Nazianzen.

⁵⁶ Chalandon, 564-5, 646ff. Cf. J. Parker, "The Attempted Byzantine Alliance with the Sicilian Norman Kingdom (1166-7).," *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 24 (1956), 86-93; C. Mango, "The Conciliar Edict of 1166," *DOP*, 17 (1963), 315-30.

The composition involved figures of the emperor, Christ, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, two apostles, and various church fathers. The descending dove is easily visualized from scenes of the Baptism of Christ, but a more relevant image is the portrait of David shown as an emperor in the Psalter in Paris (fig. 6). Here the bird hovers just above the halo of David. The mention of Jesus speaking in the ear of Manuel might refer to a type of inspirational group in which a muse or apostle leans over the shoulder of a seated author to instruct him. The scene in the Middle Byzantine period is occasionally used for St. Paul speaking to St. John Chrysostomos or for various portraits of David composing his Psalms.⁵⁷ However, it is difficult to reconcile such a self-contained group with the inclusion of the fathers offering Manuel their tomes and with the suggestion that the emperor in some way is receiving these gifts.

It is in this context that two miniatures in a manuscript in Rome, Vat. gr. 666, present twelfth-century solutions to rather similar compositional problems and thus bear closer examination. The images are found on facing pages, ff. 1v and 2r (figs. 8-9), at the beginning of the *Panoplia Dogmatica* of Euthymius Zygabenus, a text dealing with heresies and written at the request of the Emperor Alexios I, probably in the twelfth century.⁵⁸ The first page represents nine saints who extend scrolls to the emperor on the opposite recto (fig. 8). The emperor simultaneously receives the proffered rolls and listens to the half-figure of Jesus above, who is raising his right arm in the traditional gesture of speech (fig. 9). A second copy of the composition exists in a Moscow manuscript of the same text, Codex Synod. gr. 387, probably from the latter half of the twelfth century.⁵⁹

It has been suggested that the Vatican version was the original manuscript offered by Alexios I,⁶⁰ but problems arise with this

⁵⁷ On the former see S. Der Nersessian, "A Psalter and New Testament Manuscript at Dumbarton Oaks," *DOP* 19 (1965), 178; on the latter see most recently H. Buchthal, *The "Musterbuch" of Wolfenbüttel and Its Position in the Art of the Thirteenth Century* (Vienna, 1979), 30, with further references.

⁵⁸ Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 122-8 with older literature.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 128-9, figs. 83-5.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 127-8.

proposal. First, if Alexios was either the patron or the intended recipient, why are the two imperial portraits on folios 2r and 2v not inscribed with his name either on the miniatures themselves or above in the verses describing the images. Such an inscription is found paradoxically on the distinctly later Moscow portrait.⁶¹ Byzantine artists or scribes seldom omit the name of the emperor from a portrait made in his lifetime and frequently go to some effort to make alterations, when another ruler takes office.⁶² Second, the miniatures may have been painted after the reign of Alexios I. The dry, linear highlighting on the garments of Christ on f. 2v corresponds to the drapery style of a portrait of Gregory Nazianzenus in a Sinai manuscript from the middle years of the century,⁶³ and the gaunt, lined faces of the fathers on f. 1v recall the busts of apostles depicted on a leaf now in a private collection in Athens, but formerly

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁶² As in the cases of the mosaic of Constantine Monomachos at H. Sophia and the imperial portraits in Paris, Coislin 79. On the former there is the recent study of N. Oikonomides, "The Mosaic Panel of Constantine IX and Zoe in Saint Sophia," *REB*, 36 (1978), 219-32; on the latter see Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 113-8. Uninscribed imperial portraits have naturally occasioned problems of interpretation, a well-known case being the mosaic over the imperial door of H. Sophia in Constantinople. N. Oikonomides has tried to incorporate the image's anonymity into his analysis of the work. See "Leo VI and the Narthex Mosaic of St. Sophia," *DOP*, 30 (1976), 151-172. On one level, the portrait in Vat. gr. 666 could represent Alexius I, as he commissioned the text and is extolled in a panegyric on ff. 3-4, but if this was the primary function of the miniature and accompanying verses, why is there a reticence to mention the emperor's name? Might the scene be a less specific and more generalized image of imperial ideology in analogy to what Oikonomides sees as the symbolical nature of the H. Sophia mosaic?

⁶³ Mt. Sinai, cod. gr. 339, f. 4v. G. Galavaris, *The Illustrations of the Liturgical Homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus* (Princeton, 1969), frontispiece. For the date of the manuscript see J.C. Anderson, "The Illustration of Cod. Sinai. Gr. 339," *Art Bulletin*, 61 (1979), 167-85.

belonging to Mt. Athos, Dionysiou 8 of 1133.⁶⁴ The possibility exists, then, that the Vatican codex might be from the early reign of Manuel I, so that the correspondence between this double page composition and the now lost painting of Manuel, receiving what may be translated as tomes or possibly even scrolls⁶⁵ from the saints and apostles, may not be coincidental.

XII Niketas Choniates, *History*: I. Bekker, *Nicetae Choniatae historia*, CSHB (Bonn, 1835), 308

During the fight at the Milion (1181) between the partisans of Maria Porphyrogennita and the regency government of Alexios II, the loyalist troops “raised above the Arches the standards which portrayed the emperors”.⁶⁶

XIII Ibid., 352

Following the fall of Andronikos I (1185),

“in the city his image was effaced, whether one means by this the actual outline of his face, or the representations on walls and boards, since the vulgar mob destroyed them, tore them to the ground and

⁶⁴ *Byzantine Art, An European Art* (Athens, 1964), 317-8, illustrated as no. 313. Here the parent manuscript of the miniature is not mentioned, but F. Dölger, *Mönchsland Athos* (Munich, 1943), fig. 116, illustrates the page when it was still in Dionysiou cod. 8. Since then not only the single miniature, but the entire manuscript has been removed from Mt. Athos, and the book today is in the Ludwig collection, for which see A. von Euw and J.M. Plotzek, *Die Handschriften der Sammlung Ludwig, I* (Cologne, 1979), 159-63. This linear facial highlighting continues to be used in mural and manuscript painting of the later twelfth century, so that the comparisons to the two cited manuscripts are not contradictory.

⁶⁵ The word in question here, τόμος, referred to a scroll in the ancient world, but its meaning in the medieval period became less specific and could indicate other concepts, still including, however, the sense of rotulus. See B. Atsalos, *La terminologie du livre-manuscrit à l'époque byzantine* (Thessaloniki, 1971), 150-61.

⁶⁶ On the incident, see C.M. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West, 1180-1204* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), 34ff; on the Milion: C. Mango, *The Brazen House* (Copenhagen, 1959), 47-8.

stamped on them”.

One type of imperial portrait set up on walls survives in two circular marble reliefs in Washington and Venice. Thought to depict either Isaac II or Alexios III, the tondi display the Byzantine emperor dressed in ceremonial attire and holding a labarum and a globus cruciger. The identifications are not definitive, but there are resemblances to coinage of the two successors of Andronikos I.⁶⁷ In any event, the roundels are not likely to represent the latter emperor precisely because of the *damnatio memoriae* that Choniates describes.

Epigrams of Theodore Balsamon

Three poems by the canonist and titular patriarch of Antioch, Theodore Balsamon, refer to representations of Isaac II Angelos (1185-95)

Edition: K. Horna, “Die Epigramme des Theodoros Balsamon,” *Wiener Studien*, 25 (1903), 165-217; see also Lampros, ‘Ο Μαρκιανὸς Κῶδιξ 524, p. 131ff.

XIV (*post* 1187) On an icon of the bishop of Sidon having portraits of the emperor and patriarch, and of himself standing behind, near the patriarch’s feet

Like Moses, beholding in shadowy or rather reversed images the angelic protection of the emperor and the good deeds of the patriarch, you pray to see them with your own eyes illuminating, after the manner of the stars, the land of Canaan and the breadth of Paradise. And thus too may you see God cover the shore of Ailia⁶⁸ breaking the arms of the barbarians and saving the church of Sidon (p.

⁶⁷ H. Peirce and R. Tyler, “Three Byzantine Works of Art,” *DOP*, 2(1941), 1-10; W.F. Volbach and J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Byzanz und der christlichen Osten* (Berlin, 1968), 207, entry by W.F. Volbach.

⁶⁸ I.e. Jerusalem.

184-5).

The significance of this poem is not altogether clear, but the most likely explanation is that it alludes to the benefits which the Orthodox clergy hoped to reap from Saladin's conquest of Palestine and expulsion of the Latin episcopate. Isaac continued the alliance with Saladin made by Andronikos I, and religious concessions for Orthodox in the Holy Land and Muslims in Constantinople were among the terms he negotiated.⁶⁹ The patriarch referred to is probably the controversial Dositheos.⁷⁰

XV (1185-1195) On the emperor Kyr Isaac represented in the holy bath of the Holy Theotokos of the Hodegetria

This spherical bathing place was domed by the decree of emperors, but all-corrupting time blackened it, even though it had an 'apse of Solomon', a Siloan pool of hot waters, and a well brimming with miracles for the sick. But powerful time, pelting with the immoderate hail of neglect, put an end to their cleansing force. There was, it seems, no angelic grace to drive away the freezing evil and bring in warming gold. Since these unfortunate things had been done, it was necessary for the old outrages of time to suffer the sufferings of Tantalus, and arrows, killers of disease,⁷¹ to issue forth again for the world's salvation. Salvation thus came forth out of Sion, a faithful emperor, first of Angels, not destroying bows of iron and brass, as when he cut down the tyranny, but measuring our rivers of gold and scouring out the old basins. Bath ye, then, become clean, and putting off all evil-doing, pray that the imperial angel-protection may enjoy long life (p. 190-1).

The Hodegetria monastery, situated by the shore of the sea of Marmara to the north-east of the Great palace, seems to have owned

⁶⁹ C.M. Brand, "The Byzantines and Saladin." *Speculum*, 37 (1962), 170ff.

⁷⁰ See Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 100-1, 182ff.

⁷¹ Possibly an allusion to the bow which Andronikos used while defending himself in the great Palace after Isaac's coronation: see *infra*.

two bathing establishments: the “ἅγιον λουμα” mentioned in this poem, and the public bath (δημόσιον λουτράν) mentioned in another of the same collection (no. XLII, p.200).⁷² Either or both may have incorporated parts of the Baths of Arcadius, which are known to have been located in this area.⁷³ The building in question here was clearly a domed chamber containing a hot water pool, which Isaac II had restored to use. No indication is given as to the position or iconography of the emperor’s portrait, which is mentioned only in the title.

XVI (1185-1195) On the emperor Isaac portrayed in a picture on horseback with his crown and a naked sword

As you see the angelic flood of light poured out into a bodily nature, think of the dominical salvation; for as the presence of God in the flesh put an end to the deadly work of Satan, so by (divine) wisdom the grace of an Angel, having taken on a bodily nature, stopped the tyrannical homicide. So as you see Angelos carrying his sword, and, indeed, Angelos wearing his crown, praise him for his sword and his crown: the one has upheld the state of the Ausonians, the other has severed the tyrants’ heads (p.200-1)

This poem and the painting described in it must refer to the dramatic events of Isaac’s accession in 1185. Stephen Hagiochristophorites, the leading agent in Andronikos I’s reign of terror, came to Isaac’s house to arrest him. Isaac with the courage of desperation mounted his horse, rode out, cut off Hagiochristophorites’ head, and galloped down the avenue to Hagia Sophia brandishing his sword and proclaiming what he had done.⁷⁴ By taking sanctuary in Hagia Sophia, Isaac unexpectedly precipitated Andronikos’ downfall and his own coronation as emperor. His ride through the city and his

⁷² On the monastery τῶν Ὁδηγῶν in Constantinople and its dependencies see R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l’empire byzantin, I: Le siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat Occuménique, III: Les églises et les monastères* (Paris, 1969), 199ff.

⁷³ Procopius, *De Aedificiis*, II, 11.

⁷⁴ Choniates, 445-6; Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 70.

coronation were two chronologically distinct events, but the picture described in this text clearly alluded to them both, by representing the emperor on horseback with both sword and crown.

These attributes are the details on which a reconstruction of this equestrian portrait must be based, and only one, the sword, is noteworthy, for an emperor wearing a crown is scarcely remarkable. While one would wish that Balsamon had been more specific, still there is enough here to make some remarks on the image. In the first place it is important to realize that representations of emperors on horseback were not ubiquitous in the twelfth century. The ancient Roman iconography of such portraiture, known from coins and statues like that of Marcus Aurelius in Rome, was continued by the Christian emperors down to Justinian.⁷⁵ The latter's monumental equestrian statue still stood in the Augustaion of Constantinople in the twelfth century, surviving in fact until the fifteenth century;⁷⁶ but as a genre of official portraiture, the depiction of an emperor on horseback disappears after Justinian. His statue is the last of this sort, and hereafter the iconography is eliminated from coins.⁷⁷

In the Middle Byzantine period the theme occasionally occurs in minor arts with perhaps the most significant examples being the large silk of Bishop Gunther in Bamberg (fig. 10), an object that commemorates triumphs of Basil II, according to Grabar,⁷⁸ and an ivory casket in Troyes with several representations of mounted figures dressed in imperial garb and either receiving the submission

⁷⁵ For a general discussion see H. von Roques de Maumont, *Antike Reiterstandbilder* (Berlin, 1958).

⁷⁶ W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* (Tübingen, 1977), 248-9 with bibliography. On the date of the statue's destruction see the letter to the editor of the *Art Bulletin*, 41 (1959), 354 by C. Mango.

⁷⁷ Grabar, *L'Empereur*, 47.

⁷⁸ The drawing of the textile, reproduced here, is taken from C. Cahier and A. Martin, *Mélanges d'archéologie*, II (Paris, 1851), pl. XXXIV and was made soon after the piece's discovery. Detailed photographs of the better preserved sections and a thorough analysis of the work is to be found in A. Grabar, "La soie byzantine de l'évêque Gunther à la cathédrale de Bamberg," *L'Art de la fin de l'antiquité et du moyen âge*, I (Paris, 1968), 213-27, pls. 30-3.

of a town or hunting.⁷⁹ The mounted warrior or hunter appears also on various other objects, such as ivory caskets with the subject in question usually placed on the lid;⁸⁰ some enameled roundels now part of the Pala d'Oro in Venice;⁸¹ and a bronze medallion perhaps of the late twelfth century.⁸² Yet with the possible exception of the Bamberg silk, none of this art could be considered official. It is only in the Palaiologan context of the *De officiis* of Pseudo-Kodinus that equestrian portraits of the emperor are mentioned as decorating various official banners, although such devices may have been used in earlier centuries.⁸³

Thus the description of Isaac II on horseback is important evidence for the existence of this category of imperial iconography in the twelfth century and for what initially would appear to be a continuation or revival of the ancient Roman forms. Yet this is where the mention of the bare sword is important, for this detail serves to distinguish the image from earlier traditions. Mounted Roman emperors, if they carried anything in their hands at all, only held a lance or a globe. The right hand either gestured or grasped the spear, while the left hand controlled the reins or else sometimes supported the globe. For example, Justinian in his famous monument had a globus cruciger in his left hand and stretched forth his right arm, and as Procopius says, carried "neither sword nor spear nor any other

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 222-3, pl. 35.

⁸⁰ Goldschmidt-Weitzmann, I, nos. 12a, 20a, 29a, 31a, 33a, 34, 42, 40a, 85a, 98.

⁸¹ A. Grabar, "Les succès des arts orientaux à la cour byzantine sous les Macédoniens," *L'Art de la fin de l'antiquité*, I, 280-2, pl. 60.

⁸² Thomas Whittemore, "Byzantine Bronze Medallion with an Imperial Representation," *Studies in Art and Literature for Belle da Costa Greene* (Princeton, 1954), 184-92. The object represents an emperor Isaac, whom Whittemore considers to be Isaac Doukas Comnenos, who ruled the island of Cyprus between 1184 and 1191. It certainly is not likely to be an object made for the court in Constantinople because of the misspellings in the titulature.

⁸³ J. Verpeaux, *Pseudo-Kodinos, Traité des offices* (Paris, 1966), 167, 196. Whittemore suggests that such banners were used as well in the eleventh century: "A Bronze Medallion", 190, n.37.

weapon."⁸⁴ In the period after Iconoclasm two of the mounted imperial figures on the Troyes casket carry lances in the manner of an earlier medallion of Justinian I, and two other horsemen hunt with sword or bow and arrow, activities that may link them ultimately with the Sassanian tradition of the royal hunt.⁸⁵ The emperor on the Bamberg silk (fig. 10) holds a labarum by then a venerable symbol of power, as does an emperor inscribed as Isaac on a bronze medallion published by Whittemore.⁸⁶ Finally the riders shown in imperial dress on those small roundels on the Pala d'Oro gallop along with a bird of prey on their right arms, all of which represents another imitation of oriental princely themes, in this case from the Muslim world.⁸⁷

The portrait of Isaac II, riding and holding a drawn sword, departs from any of these earlier examples. A possible exception might be the single figure on the Troyes ivory of an emperor attacking a lion with his sword, but the latter vignette probably belongs to a separate category of hunting scenes and is thus not truly relevant. This is not to suggest that Byzantium did not know any iconographic tradition analogous to the picture of Isaac II, because it did in other types of subject matter. For example, on the decorated rosette caskets of the tenth to twelfth centuries small warriors, either on foot or horseback, often battle real or imaginary foes with lances, shields, and swords.⁸⁸ More important, though, are the depictions of military saints in the same period. To emphasize their martial prowess, they frequently hold spears or half- or fully-drawn swords. Thus on an eleventh-century steatite carving in Moscow, St. Demetrios, who

⁸⁴ Procopius, *De Aedificiis* I, ii, 1ff. Translated in Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 110-11. The drawing of the statue is illustrated in von Roques de Maumont, *Antike Reiterstandbilder*, fig. 36a, as are other ancient examples of the equestrian figure.

⁸⁵ For the casket see above note 79. On the medallion see von Roques de Maumont, *Antike Reiterstandbilder*, fig. 36b.

⁸⁶ See above note 82.

⁸⁷ Grabar, "Le succès," *L'Art de la fin de l'antiquité*, I, 281.

⁸⁸ Goldschmidt-Weitzmann, I, nos. 20a, 34, 40a, 98.

often bears a sword, holds his weapon proudly against his chest in a military salute, as he parades past on his horse (fig. 11).⁸⁹

A close interrelationship existed between such holy warriors and the emperor in his role as leader of the army, so that in the well-known portrait of Basil II in the Marciana Psalter, the soldier saints and emperor are dressed similarly, and the accompanying verses state that these saints are Basil's allies, "for he is their friend. They smite [his enemies] who are lying at his feet."⁹⁰ Thus it is legitimate to propose the Moscow carving as one way in which to visualize the lost portrait of Isaac, and indeed, with the exception of the hand-held attribute, the pose of both the saint and his horse mirrors that of the principal figure on the Bamberg silk (fig. 10). If the portrait of Isaac, on the other hand, was less ceremonial and more active, it might have resembled the several small ivory panels of riders waving their swords,⁹¹ a scene used also for an eleventh-century miniature of Saul dressed as an emperor and riding in pursuit of David.⁹²

The fact that it is difficult to find closer contemporary analogies to the equestrian figure of Isaac underscores its singularity. In content the image fits better with the Early Byzantine tradition of an emperor vigorously triumphing over, if not actually stepping on, his foes⁹³ and corresponds less to the more passive Middle Byzantine images of emperors shown receiving their gifts of power and victory from God. To perceive this change in ideology, one has only to contrast the representations of triumphant emperors on the

⁸⁹ A. Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums* (New York, 1978), 298, pls. 145-6 in color. The pose, probably a conventional one, echoes that of an anonymous warrior on an ivory casket in Baltimore: Goldschmidt-Weitzmann, I, no. 40a, pl. XXI.

⁹⁰ Translated by I. Ševčenko, "The Illuminators of the Menologium of Basil II," *DOP*, 16 (1962), 272. A recent study of the manuscript is A. Cutler, "A Psalter of Basil II," *Arte Veneta*, 30 (1976), 9-19; 31 (1977), 9-15.

⁹¹ Goldschmidt-Weitzmann, I, nos. 20a, 34, 98.

⁹² DeWald, *Vaticanus Graecus* 752, 38, pl. L.

⁹³ In general see Grabar, *Empereur*, 44-5.

sixth-century Barberini diptych and the Marciana Psalter from the early eleventh century.⁹⁴ Coinage too displays a similar retreat from themes of imperial conquest to images of Christ, the Virgin, or saints crowning or blessing the emperor.

Given this general trend, it is interesting to note the exceptions to it, for they may bear upon the portrait of Isaac II. The first is a type of histamenon (fig. 12), issued by Isaac I Comnenos (1057-1059).⁹⁵ Isaac appears on the reverse, holding a bare sword against his shoulder in a manner similar to the equestrian St. Demetrios on the Moscow steatite (fig. 11) and to the standing figure of St. Theodore Tiro on one wing of a tenth- or eleventh-century triptych in Leningrad,⁹⁶ correspondences that once more reveal the connections between military saints and the emperor. Contemporary historians did not approve of Isaac I's iconographic innovations. To them the pronounced military character of this coinage was offensive, because it implied that the emperor owed his power to his own martial talents and not to the will of God.⁹⁷

Hereafter this particular coin type was not repeated, but there is an interesting use of the sword once again during the reign of Isaac II. His hyperpyra represent the emperor and the Archangel Michael standing side by side and jointly holding a partially sheathed sword (fig. 13). In these instances Michael wears military dress.⁹⁸ Earlier emperors had been set next to a soldier saint, and as in the case of coins of Manuel I, the two might hold a cross or labarum between them. Alternatively the two figures might rest their outer hands on

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pls. IV, XXIII, 1.

⁹⁵ P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, III, 2 (Washington, 1973), 759-60, pl. LXIII.

⁹⁶ Bank, *Byzantine Art* (1978), pl. 124; Goldschmidt-Weitzmann, II, 27, no. 9, pl. III.

⁹⁷ Grierson, *Catalogue*, III, 2, 759-60.

⁹⁸ M.F. Hendy, *Coinage and Money in the Byzantine Empire 1081-1261* (Washington, 1969), 143, pl. 20, 1-4.

their scabbards in mirror image of each other.⁹⁹ but the replacement of the traditional symbols of the cross or labarum by a half-drawn sword is a significant variation that magnifies the military aspect. This, then, is the background against which the lost portrait of Isaac II should be seen. Borrowing from the iconography of soldier saints, a source of continuity with the war-like poses of early Byzantine emperors, the picture presented the equestrian emperor in an attitude that would have appeared triumphal and militant to the contemporary, and this impression may explain the general tone of Balsamon's poem.¹⁰⁰

XVII Robert of Clari, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1924), 28

After the day that Kyrisaac became emperor, they depicted on the portals of the churches how Kyrisaac had become emperor by a miracle, and how Our Lord placed the crown on his head on one side and Our Lady on the other, and how the Angel cut the string of the bow with which Andrommes (Andronikos) tried to wound him, because his (Isaac's) family had the name Angelos.

This passage occurs in the context of the long digression on recent Byzantine history introduced by the author in order to explain the dynastic intrigues which led to the diversion of the Fourth Crusade. Robert's account of Isaac's rise to power, like that to be found in

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 111-16, pls. 13-14.

¹⁰⁰ Whittemore ("A Byzantine Bronze Medallion," 190-1), who published a bronze medallion which he assigned to Isaac Comnenus of Cyprus, tried to make the argument that the iconography of the roundel was influenced by the coins and seals of the Crusaders. That case might also be put forth for the portrait of Isaac II, because such coinage and sigillography depict a mounted ruler with a drawn sword. However, the thrust of the above discussion is that the equestrian emperor follows indigenous traditions of Byzantine art. There is no need to go outside that sphere for inspiration unless a particular detail can only be found in western sources, and such is not the case with either the medallion or the described portrait. For the Crusader evidence, see G. Schlumberger, *Numismatique de l'orient latin* (Paris, 1878, reprinted Graz, 1954) and G. Schlumberger et al., *Sigillographie de l'orient latin* (Paris, 1943).

other western histories, and like much else in his work, seems to have been based on stories current at the end of the century, which weave factual threads into highly embroidered versions of the truth.¹⁰¹ In this instance, the author refers back to a tale he has just told of how Andronikos had tried to shoot at Isaac from the roof of Hagia Sophia after the latter had been crowned (p. 24). It is easy to dismiss this explanation: according to Choniates, Andronikos was out of Constantinople up to the time of Isaac's coronation, and when he returned he did not leave the Great Palace.¹⁰² But does this invalidate Robert's description of the paintings? He had every opportunity to visit the churches of Constantinople in 1204, and his description of the city's monuments shows that his visual memory was both vivid and accurate. The iconography he describes does not seem inappropriate. Coronation by Christ and the Virgin was a standard theme. The pun on Isaac's name of Angelos was common enough in encomiastic literature of Isaac's reign, including Balsamon's poems, and representations of figures with a bow and arrow are common enough in mythological, hunting, and historical illustrations.¹⁰³ It seems unlikely that Andronikos tried to shoot Isaac in the church, but would this necessarily have been implied in the painting? In much of Byzantine imperial art the concern was evidently for apt symbolism rather than strict historical accuracy. The testimony of Robert of Clari makes sense, when it is seen that the pictures he describes, like that described by Balsamon in the previous text, conflate two separate episodes. Choniates records that when the mob stormed the Great palace immediately after Isaac's coronation, Andronikos at first tried to defend it, but finding few of his followers disposed to fight, "he himself carried the battle, *taking a bow in his hands... and shooting arrows at his attackers*". Realising

¹⁰¹ E.H. Macneal, "The Story of Isaac and Andronicus," *Speculum*, 9 (1934), 324-9.

¹⁰² Choniates, 448ff.

¹⁰³ Cf. scenes in the Pseudo-Oppian in Venice. Bibl., Marc. Cod. gr. 479: K. Weitzmann, *Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art* (Princeton, 1951), figs. 128, 129, 131; and on the Troyes casket: Grabar, *L'Art de la fin de l'antiquité*, III, pl. 35b; and in the Madrid Scylitzes: Estopañan, *Skylitzes*, *passim*.

that he was attempting the impossible, he offered to abdicate in favor of his son Manuel, believing that this would make the crowd disperse, but in fact it enraged them all the more. Soon they broke into the palace and Andronikos had to flee.¹⁰⁴

Thus according to the most reliable source, Andronikos did contest Isaac's accession with a bow and arrows, in highly public and dramatic circumstances. That the pictures described by Robert of Clari appear to tell a different story is surely to be explained by the need to keep the composition simple, and give it maximum propaganda value. By showing Andronikos aiming at Isaac and Isaac being crowned, the artist emphasized that Andronikos, not Isaac, was the usurper, trying to upset a divinely-established order; by showing the angel cutting the bowstring he depicted the vanity of Andronikos' effort while working in an iconographic pun on Isaac's family name. All in all, the representations described by Robert of Clari are entirely credible, even if his version of events is not. Indeed, the latter perhaps reveals his reliance on pictorial evidence, or on the word of people whose knowledge of recent history had been influenced by visual propaganda.

Conclusion

The material presented above, together with that previously available in translation, offers a basis for some general remarks about Byzantine imperial art of the twelfth century and, equally, about the twelfth century as a period in the history of Byzantine official portraiture. Firstly, as regards the physical context of imperial portraits, one learns that they were widely displayed, both in Constantinople and in provincial towns. Imperial portraits were displayed on boards, banners, and walls; dynastic portrait groups and cycles representing imperial exploits were commissioned for private houses. Emperors were also portrayed in churches and monastic buildings, often to commemorate their benefactions, but sometimes too for purposes of pure political propaganda. Above all, the imperial palaces were decorated with ambitious mosaic

¹⁰⁴ Choniates, 450-1.

programmes, which no doubt served as the iconographic prototypes for representations elsewhere.

To judge from all written and pictorial evidence, the essential feature of every work of imperial art was the full-length frontal portrait of the emperor in his regalia. Probably the great majority of official pictures were representations of this type, which was complete in itself, for in showing the emperor wearing his exclusive vestments, it pointed to his essential attribute: his God-given and godlike power.¹⁰⁵ Insofar as public portraiture was intended to show people who was emperor and make his presence immediate, some degree of realistic portrayal was necessary, and surviving representations of John and Manuel are consistent with physical descriptions of them.¹⁰⁶ However, equally important was the need to show how the emperor differed from other mortals, and in this it was the unchanging, impersonal features which counted. The basic portrait type was as stylised as that of any religious figure, and could be reproduced and incorporated into composite scenes with a minimum of difficulty.

At first sight, imperial art would seem to have required greater innovation and more complex handling than religious art in that its iconography was bound to change with the taste, the political preoccupations, and the repertoire of exploits of individual emperors. Yet if we try to reconstruct the composite scenes described in our sources, we realize that in most cases the artist was

¹⁰⁵ Grabar, *L'empereur*, 20ff. Cod. Iust. XI, 2 reserved a number of precious materials *ad cultum et ornatum imperatorum*; rhetorical sources frequently dwell on the imperial insignia and their symbolism: Regel, *Fontes*, 94, 244; Gautier, *Michel Italikos*, 76; and the text cited *infra*, n. 17-18. On the purpose and significance of imperial images, see St. Basil, *PG*, 32, col. 145; St. Athanasios, *PG*, 26, col. 332; St. Gregory Nazianzen, *PG*, 35, col. 635; A. Alföldi, "Die Ausgestaltung des monarchischen Zeremoniells am römischen Kaiserhofe," *Mitteilungen des deutschen archaeologischen Instituts, römische Abteilung*, 49 (1934), 65-79, especially 73ff; Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser und Reichsidee*, 205ff.

¹⁰⁶ Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 79-83, 209-10, 254-8. Cf. Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, ed. Leib, II, 63; Choniates, 69; Eustathios, *Opuscula*, ed. Tafel, 201. Especially interesting is the physical description of Manuel given in the inaugural oration of his reign: Gautier, *Michel Italikos*, 281-2.

either working within an established tradition or creating simple compositions from familiar and straight-forward elements. The most ambitious and complex programmes appear to have been those showing the emperor victorious in war, or hunting. Both scenes were traditional to imperial art, and, if not continuously practised up to the Comnenian period, were certainly represented in old buildings of the Great Palace, such as the Chalke of Justinian and the Kainourgion of Basil I.¹⁰⁷ The other scenes described in our sources were 'new' in the most superficial sense, but whether they were dynastic portrait groups or compositions showing the emperor with divine or allegorical figures, they involved no more than the juxtaposition of stylised types. The statue projected by Andronikos I and the painting in which he had himself portrayed as a farm labourer called for more ambitious borrowing, but material for the former was readily at hand in early Byzantine imperial statues,¹⁰⁸ and the latter may have drawn on 'labours of the months' programmes, or illustrated books of prophecies.¹⁰⁹ The pictures commemorating Isaac II's accession would seem to have introduced new elements — the emperor riding with drawn sword, or Andronikos drawing his bow; but as we have seen, they might easily have been composed from stock elements found in traditional secular and religious art.

The twelfth-century imperial iconography for which we have evidence is less remarkable for its innovations than for one obvious omission: there is no indication of the emperor being portrayed in his ceremonial role at the Hippodrome, as he clearly had been in the

¹⁰⁷ Procopius, *De Aedificiis*, I, x, 10ff; Theophanes Continuatus, CSHB (Bonn, 1838), 332-5; Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 108-10, 196-8; Grabar, *L'empereur*, 36-40.

¹⁰⁸ That these were numerous is clear from the *Parastaseis* and *Patria*. The last rulers before Andronikos known to have commissioned statues were Constantine VI and Eirene at the end of the eighth century. Cf. Th. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitarum*, II, (Leipzig, 1907), 181-2, 278.

¹⁰⁹ Choniates, 332; Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 234; Grabar, *L'empereur*, 4, 16ff. Mango, "The Legend of Leo the Wise," *ZRVI*, 6 (1960), 64, suggests that Andronikos' picture may have inspired illustrations of the Oracles of Leo the Wise, but it is equally conceivable that the borrowing was vice-versa.

eleventh century.¹¹⁰ This omission is surprising in view of the fact that games were held by all the emperors of the period.¹¹¹ The apparent eclipse of hippodrome iconography in the twelfth century may reflect the religious policy of the Comneni and their patriarchs, who made great efforts to stamp out heretical and pagan practices, and may therefore have shared the purist attitudes of such as Niketas Stethatos.¹¹² It is equally possible that increased imperial residence at the Blachernae Palace during this period diminished the traditional role of the Hippodrome as the place where the emperor made his ceremonial public appearance, especially if it is true that the *prokypsis* ceremony, which seems to have replaced the ceremonial acclamations at the Hippodrome, was instituted by one

¹¹⁰ The staircase frescoes of the church of S. Sophia at Kiev: A. Grabar, "Les fresques des escaliers à Sante-Sophie et l'iconographie byzantine," *Seminarium Kondakovium*, 7 (1935), 103-117; *idem*, *L'empereur*, 62-74; V. Lazarev, *Old Russian Murals and Mosaics* (London, 1966), 56ff, 236ff. The eleventh-century writer Niketas Stethatos presumably had this kind of depiction in mind when he complained that those people who were offended by icons of Symeon the New Theologian were quite content to have churches and sacred hangings decorated with "things of the stage... games, and hunting and dancing scenes, different kinds of dogs, apes, and reptiles, and flocks of beasts and birds": *Vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien*, ed. I. Hausherr, *Orientalia Christiana*, 12 (Rome, 1928) 128. Grabar's statement (*L'empereur*, 58, 62) that Manuel and Andronikos took part in chariot racing and had themselves depicted in this role is based on a misunderstanding of the texts of Eustathios and Choniates which he quotes.

¹¹¹ Anna Comnena, ed. Leib, II, 71-2; III, 230; Prodhomos, ed. Hörandner, 261-4; Cinnamus, 86, 207, 211; Choniates, 120, 155-6, 206, 375-6, 410, 521, 702; K. Horna, "Eine unedierte Rede des Konstantin Manasses," *Wiener Studien*, 28 (1906), 194-7; Benjamin of Tudela, ed. and tr. Adler, 13; William of Tyre, in *Recueil des historiens des croisades, historien occidentaux*, I, 2 (Paris, 1844), 985, 1067; Eustathios of Thessalonica in *Scorialensis GR*. -II-10, fols. 368ff; Theodore Balsamon, *PG*, 137, cols. 592-6, 692-3, 757. Altogether, these testimonies suggest that the Hippodrome was more active during the twelfth century than modern scholars have supposed: R. Guiland, "La disparition des courses," *Études byzantines* (Paris, 1959), 89-90, followed by A. Cameron, *Circus Factions* (Oxford, 1976), 308.

¹¹² See note 52; cf. also Balsamon, *PG*, 137, cols 732. 741; R. Browning, "Enlightenment and Repression in Byzantium in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," *Past and Present* (1975), 15-23.

of the Comnenian emperors.¹¹³

In the main, therefore, imperial art of the twelfth century was as formulaic as religious art. Grabar has shown how Byzantine religious iconography in its formative years borrowed heavily from the imperial tradition.¹¹⁴ By the twelfth century, any borrowing was probably in the other direction, since religious art had become the mainstream, and much imperial portraiture occurred in a religious context. Whichever way the current flowed, the notion that the emperor was the image of Christ ensured a permanent bridge between the two traditions.

Imperial art of the period also has much in common with the stylised literary genres of Byzantine court rhetoric. We have already seen how the idiosyncracies of one palatine mosaic cycle can be compared to those which make the *Alexiad* distinctive in Byzantine historical writing. Other, more direct and explicit parallels can be found. Panegyrics celebrating the emperor's virtues or recounting his victories had their counterparts in the mosaic cycles of the imperial palace. The connection between art and rhetoric becomes all the more meaningful when it is remembered that such works were delivered before audiences familiar with their artistic equivalents and in close proximity to them. Few texts are so explicit as the orations of Eustathios of Thessalonica and Euthymios Malakes which actually refer to works of art, but these allow one to suppose that the *topos* of likening the panegyric to a picture could be functional as well as conventional. The common function of official

¹¹³ A. Heisenberg, "Aus der Geschichte und Literatur der Palaiologenzeit," *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse, Jahrgang 1920*, 10. Abhandlung, 84ff. It should be noted, however, that the text on which Heisenberg based his argument — a passage from the vulgar paraphrase of Choniates' history (p. 629) — does not prove that the *prokypsis* ceremony was long established at the time of the event to which it refers, the Christmas celebrations of 1196. It suggests, moreover, that the name itself was a later development (τὴν νῦν λεγομένην πρόκυψιν). Certainly, it is not until the Palaiologan period that we find evidence of a permanent structure for the performance of the *prokypsis* at the Blachernae: Pseudo-Kodinos, *Traité des Offices*, ed. J. Verpeaux (Paris, 1966), 196-8; Gregoras, II, 616. Xanthopoulos states that this structure was built by Andronikos II: *PG*, 145, col. 585.

¹¹⁴ Grabar, *L'empereur*, part 3.

art and official literature is demonstrated most clearly by the very purpose of the verse texts which have concerned us. Whether these were actually inscribed on the monuments, or whether they were literary celebrations in the nature of *ekphrasis*, the verbal expression and the visual image accompanied each other with liturgical coordination, as closely as the words and music of a hymn. Both were examples of rhetoric produced for public occasions. The collections of (largely) twelfth-century *belles-lettres* with which we are concerned are perhaps poorer in literary elegance and intellectual puzzles than the Palatine and Planudean anthologies, but they represent the same cultural processes at work and are equally valuable as means of approach to a vanished visual world.¹¹⁵

In connection with the subject of parallels between imperial art and rhetoric in this period, mention must be made of a text which could not be reproduced here in translation, partly because of its length, and partly because it lacks any conclusive identifying features. This is the *Ekphrasis of the jousts of our mighty and holy lord and emperor* published by Lampros.¹¹⁶ As Lampros argues, the emperor in question is almost certainly Manuel I, although there is nothing in the title or in the text to substantiate his assumption that it describes a picture of jousting, rather than a joust as such. However, the description has a remarkably pictorial quality in its close attention to color, and in the way it evokes static attitudes rather than action. It translates so well into the language of Byzantine painting that it could almost serve as the specification for a commission. Even if it does not attest to the existence of an actual painting, it is a striking example of the common perception shared by artists and writers, and indicates, moreover, that Byzantine secular literature is useful to the art historian not only as a mine of information about lost monuments, or for what it has to say about art — which is likely to be disappointingly banal by modern standards — but also for what it does in common with art. This being so, the relevant texts are not

¹¹⁵ The classic study of rhetoric in its monumental context is Alan Cameron, *Porphyrius the Charioteer* (Oxford, 1973).

¹¹⁶ Sp. Lampros, «Ἐκφρασις τῶν ξυλοκονταριῶν τοῦ κραταίου καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν αὐθέντου καὶ βασιλέως», *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων*, 5 (1908), 3-18.

only those which explicitly mention art; equally, in studying those which do, the fundamental criterion is not that of 'realism', but the purpose and context for which a work was composed.¹¹⁷

Enough has been said to make it clear that the rhetoric of twelfth-century Byzantine imperial art is entirely explicable in terms of well-established cultural conventions. But given that all iconographic and possible stylistic elements are likely to be derivative, do twelfth-century developments represent a normal phase of a continuous process, or a revival of old themes in a context of exceptional efflorescence, as the abundance of written evidence might suggest? Other factors must now be considered: the quantity of evidence for the period in relation to others, its distribution within the period, and variations in subject-matter according to reign and patron.

The evidence for imperial art in any period of Byzantine history is hard to measure quantitatively, since surviving art-works and textual documentation do not fall into recognisably corresponding chronological patterns. Even within the body of textual material, it is difficult to know whether to give priority to the general, but weighty, statements of patristic, legal, and canonical texts which provide such important evidence for the fourth, fifth, and eighth centuries; the narrative sources which constitute major sources for the sixth, ninth, and twelfth centuries; or the rhetorical pieces which are especially numerous for the twelfth century. These rhetorical pieces are clearly most valuable in that they provide very specific information and were usually executed in conjunction with the monuments themselves. On the other hand, their survival has depended heavily on the selective and accidental processes of manuscript preservation and textual transmission. Furthermore, it cannot be assumed that because verbal and visual rhetoric served the same purpose they were always equal and complementary partners. Basil II is said to have had little time for men of letters, but he employed the best

¹¹⁷ On the question of "realism", see H. Maguire, "Truth and Convention in Byzantine Descriptions of Works of Art," *DOP*, 28 (1974), 113-40; for an attempt to apply common criteria to artistic and literary style, see Averil Cameron, "Corippus' poem Justin II: a Terminus of Antique Art?," *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, 3rd series, 6 (1975), 129-45.

artists of his day to execute his famous *Menologium* and *Psalter*, of which the latter and perhaps the former included portraits of himself.¹¹⁸ Literary celebrations of works of art may, therefore, reflect a patron's respect for the written and recited word rather than the extent to which he commissioned the painted image.

Even with these considerations in mind, it is fair to say that the amount of evidence for twelfth-century imperial portraiture is impressive, and perhaps exceptional if we confine our attention to the post-iconoclastic period. It is a phenomenon to be explained, not explained away. Turning to the distribution of literary evidence within the period, we find that it is far from evenly spread. For one emperor, Alexios III (1195-1203), there is no evidence at all. Alexios I (1081-1118) and John II (1118-1143) are minimally represented, and in somewhat self-effacing roles. Very little is attested for Alexios II (1180-1182), although given the shortness of his reign and his failure to take an active political role, this is perhaps not surprising. It is therefore the remaining three emperors — Manuel I (1143-1180), Andronikos I (1182-1185), and Isaac II (1185-1195) — who account for the bulk of the evidence. Of these, Manuel I takes clear precedence. Not only is the number of attested examples exceptional, but so are the range of themes and the variety of context; Manuel is in fact the only one of the three represented in triumphal and hunting iconography as well as in dynastic portrait groups, donor/patron portraits, and scenes depicting the emperor in the company of heavenly figures; the only one, too, whose exploits are known to have been depicted in private houses and provincial towns.

On the face of it, therefore, it would appear that the reign of Manuel I is the key to the whole period as far as developments in official art are concerned. But again, does the written evidence speak for itself in its quantity and variety? Above all, does it show that Manuel commissioned and encouraged imperial portraiture on a larger scale or in a more flamboyant way than his father, John II, or his grandfather, Alexios I?

In general, the three great Comnenian rulers present such striking

¹¹⁸ Michael Psellos, *Chronographia*, ed. E. Renauld (Paris, 1926), I, 18; I. Ševčenko, "The Illuminators of the *Menologium* of Basil II," 245-76; and *idem*, "On Pantoleon the Painter," *JÖB*, 21 (1972), 241-9.

similarities in their aims and methods that the attempt to contrast them can easily become an artificial, or superficial exercise. The innovations in administration, finance, hierarchy and patronage which had been introduced by Alexios I were maintained by his son and grandson. All three rulers saw themselves as contributing to a single Comnenian *renovatio imperii*, aimed at recovering lost territory in the east and resisting encroachment from the west, and all recognized the value of cultural patronage for giving conviction and expression to their ideal. The Orphanotropheion of Alexios I, the Pantokrator monastery of John II, the towns founded or refounded by Manuel I, Alexios' and Manuel's palace buildings, John's and Manuel's triumphal processions and games, the court *litterateurs* whose careers span more than one reign, not to mention the lavish patronage of all kinds dispensed by imperial relatives and subsidised from imperial funds, suggest that from the beginning it was consistent dynastic policy to display imperial magnificence to the full.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ There is no comprehensive and up to date study of Comnenian society and administration, although the revelant chapters of H. Glykatzis-Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer* (Paris, 1966), provide a useful introduction. See also A. Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte des Oströmischen Reiches unter den Komnenen*, *Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia*, I (Munich, 1965); A.P. Každan, *Social'nyj sostav gosподsvujuščego klassa Vizantii Xle-XIIE vv.* (Moscow, 1974) (French summary by I. Sorlin, *TM*, 6 (1976), 378); N. Oikonomides, "L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au Xle siècle," *TM*, 6 (1976), 127-8; P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le Xle siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 297-300, 309-12. The Comnenian sense of *renovatio*: e.g. Eustathios, ed. Regel, *Fontes*, 66 — τὸ Κοιμητηριὸν ἔαρ. The Orphanotropheion: Anna Comnena, ed. Leib, III, 214-8; Michael Glykas, *CSHB* (Bonn, 1836), 621-2; Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 283. The Pantokrator Monastery: P. Gautier, "Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantokrator," *REB*, 32 (1974), 1-145; A.H.S. Megaw, "Notes on Recent Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul," *DOP*, 17 (1963), 335-64. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 209-215; T. Mathews, *Byzantine Churches of Istanbul* (University Park, 1976), 71-101. Towns and palace buildings: see note 20a, 36, *supra*. Games: *supra*, note 110. Triumphs: Cinnamus, 13, 249; Choniates, 26, 120, 205; Prodromos, ed. Hörandner, 199-228. On the literature of the Comnenian period, see the revelant sections of K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur* (Munich, 1897), and H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*; also Hörandner's introduction to his edition of the poems of Theodore Prodromos, and Browning, *op. cit.* (*supra*, note 112). Comnenian family patronage: *supra*, note 18; Zonaras, III 767; Gautier, "Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite," *REB*, 27 (1969), 41; Choniates, 266, 271.

However, against this general background the cultural patronage of Manuel I does stand out in certain significant respects. Although all three Comnenian rulers patronised men of letters, the quantity of surviving rhetorical literature devoted to praise of Manuel is exceptional.¹²⁰ All three rulers built on a large scale, but Manuel was the one who achieved most fame as a palace builder. He not only, like Alexios I, made extensive additions to the Blachernae complex, but added at least one major building to the Bosphoros.¹²¹ No other emperor since Basil I is recorded as having commissioned so much palace architecture. This fact is important to note, because it indicates that Manuel provided unusual scope for the execution of palatine mosaic cycles; it also suggests that he sought to emulate those emperors of a remote past who had done most to create the physical environment of Byzantine imperial power.

¹²⁰ The distribution of known imperial orations addressed to the Komnenoi and Angeloi is as follows: Alexios I: 2; John II: 2; Manuel I: 13; Alexios II: none; Andronikos I: none; Isaac II: 6; Alexios III: 7. Of all the Byzantine emperors, only Andronikos II Palaiologos, with 13 orations to his name, appears to have rivalled Manuel as a subject of panegyric, and any comparison must take into account the certainty that much literature was destroyed in the sack of 1204. Works composed in praise of the emperor's specific achievements, or in honour of events such as imperial marriages, may also be considered as pieces of imperial panegyric, and encomia of patriarchs or government officials included tributes to the imperial master: cf. e.g. Gautier, *Michel Italikos*, 75-6. For editions and studies of the relevant prose works of Michael Italikos, Theodore Prodromos, Basil Achridenos, Eustathios of Thessalonica, Nikephoros Basilakes, Michael the Rhetor, Michael of Anchialos, Euthymios Malakes, Constantine Manasses, John Diogenes, Gregory of Antioch, see Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I, 123ff, 136f, 150, 185-6, 235-6. George Tornikes (ed. Darrouzès, 233) says that there were "thousands of orators" at the court of Alexios I, but the editor rightly points out that 'l'époque de Manuel est beaucoup mieux représentée et fut certainement plus féconde'. No doubt with equal exaggeration Michael of Anchialos claimed that Manuel revived philosophy and the Muses: R. Browning, "A New Source on Byzantine-Hungarian Relations in the Twelfth Century. The Inaugural Lecture of Michael ὁ τοῦ Ἀγγιάλου ἀσ ἑπατος τῶν φιλοσόφων," *Balkan Studies*, 2(1961), 188-90 (despite the title given it by the editor, this work deserves to be considered as an imperial oration).

¹²¹ Magdalino, "Manuel Komnenos and the Great Palace," *passim* and note 42; Choniates, 268-9; Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 224; *supra*, note 36.

It seems fair to conclude, therefore, that if the evidence for pictorial representations of Manuel I is especially abundant, this is because Manuel's cultural patronage, although not necessarily more munificent than that of the earlier Komnenoi, gave special encouragement to those forms of expression which emphasized the imperial image (in the widest sense of the word). Everything about Manuel's style of government suggests that such was indeed his policy. The almost fairy-tale descriptions of his ostentation;¹²² the emphasis given in literature to the energy and versatility with which he assumed the roles of law-giver, theologian, physician and diplomat;¹²³ the importance he attached to astrology and divination;¹²⁴ his taste for symbolic commemoration;¹²⁵ his pointed preference for public benefactions which restored the ancient institutions and monuments of urban, ecclesiastical, and monastic life, as opposed to the prestigious new foundations for which other Komnenoi were famous;¹²⁶ his concern to identify himself as the heir of Constantine and Justinian, explicitly claiming the territories they

¹²² Cinnamus, 205-7; Choniates, 158; William of Tyre, *RHCC, Historiens occidentaux*, I, 2 (Paris, 1844), 983-5; Michael the Syrian, *RHCC, Documents arméniens*, I, 155; Robert of Clari, ed. Lauer, 16, 19; Regel, *Fontes*, 94, 310.

¹²³ Regel, *Fontes*, 3ff. 12; Browning, "New source," 188, 190-2; Euthymios Malakes, ed. K.G. Mpones, *Τὰ σωζόμενα*, fasc. 2 (Athens, 1949), 47ff (especially 51, lines 18-24), 83-7; Eustathios, *Opuscula*, ed. Tafel, 202-6; Cinnamus, 253. For a less favourable view of Manuel's pretensions to theological expertise, see Choniates, 274.

¹²⁴ Choniates, 126, 196, 200, 220, 286-7; *Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum*, ed. F. Cumont and F. Boll, V, 1 (Brussels, 1904), 106ff; L. Oeconomus, *La vie religieuse dans l'empire byzantin au temps des Comnènes et des Anges* (Paris, 1918).

¹²⁵ E.g. the bronze cross which he planted in Hungarian territory in 1166, and the precious reliquary cross which he commissioned for his expedition against Iconium in 1175-6; Lampros, *Neos Hellenomnemon*, 5 (1908), 51, 178; Cinnamus, 261.

¹²⁶ Cinnamus, 274ff; Choniates, 268-72; Regel, *Fontes*, 32, 138, 164; Eustathios, *Opuscula* ed. Tafel, 207-8; Browning, "New source," 196-7; N. Svoronos, "Un rescrit inédit de Manuel Ier Comnène," *TM*, 1 (1965), 328-9, 360-1, 379ff.

had lost:¹²⁷ all these characteristics mark Manuel out as a ruler who not only wanted to be impressive, but was acutely conscious of the impressions he was making; who not only believed in a Comnenian *renovatio*, but was obsessed with projecting and defining his own role as *renovator*. In this, he differed perceptibly from his predecessors, but the difference was not incompatible with his basic commitment to inherited dynastic aims. It was only natural that Comnenian imperial ideology should have evolved, rather than remained static, in the course of three generations, and that it should have matured in the third generation, after half a century of dynastic continuity, internal stability and military success. Manuel's reign fits into "the typical rhythm of generations in a powerful family", at the stage where the prodigal grandson takes over, "burdened with the heritage of fame and responsibility, dissatisfied with mere wealth, striving restlessly for higher things, a gifted dilettante, perhaps the most interesting of the three generations but also the most elusive".¹²⁸ The scheme which E.H. Gombrich applies to Lorenzo de Medici has some relevance to Manuel, as also to other medieval monarchs of the third generation. Its weakness lies in its possible implication that the third generation lacks realism; this is not a helpful point of view from which to examine the attitude of an

¹²⁷ C. Mango, "The Conciliar Edict of 1166," *DOP*, 17 (1963), 324: an explicit claim to the inheritance of Constantine the Great, and a string of triumphal epithets reminiscent of Justinian. Cf. P. Lamma, *Comneni e Staufer. Ricerche sui rapporti fra Bizanzio e l'Occidente nel secolo XII* (Rome, 1955), 204. P. Classen, *op cit.* (*Supra*, no 31).

¹²⁸ E.H. Gombrich, "The Early Medici as Patrons of Art," *Italian Renaissance Studies*. Edited by E.F. Jacob (London, 1960), 304.

accomplished politician such as Manuel undoubtedly was.¹²⁹ In trying to understand why Manuel's career could have represented a new stage in the development of Comnenian imperial ideology, it is important to recognize that not only had generations changed since 1081, but so had the shape of external and internal politics. Abroad, it was no longer sufficient for an emperor to repair the damage done to Byzantine prestige by barbarians; he had to steal the thunder from monarchies which competed with Byzantium very much on its own civilized terms: the Norman-Sicilian kingdom built up by Roger II (1101-1154), with its formidable sea-power and brilliant cosmopolitan court, where the Greek element was strong;¹³⁰ and the German monarchy of Frederick Barbarossa with its own programme

¹²⁹ The literary qualities of Choniates' history have perhaps led modern scholars to credit the author with more objectivity than he possessed, and to be insufficiently wary of accepting his generally unsympathetic appraisal of Manuel and later twelfth-century emperors. Despite the perceptive study of Manuel's western policy by Paolo Lamma (*Comneni e Staufer*), the idea dies hard that Manuel's over-ambition undid the real, and realistic, achievements of Alexios and John: Chalandon, 607; G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, tr. J.M. Hussey (Oxford, 1968), 380ff. A reinterpretation of the reign is needed, one that will take into account (a) the possibility that Manuel's flamboyance was essentially a *defensive* reaction to the circumstances of his accession and the double trauma of the Sicilian invasion and the passage of the Second Crusade (1147); (b) the likelihood that Byzantine society in the twelfth century was not, as has traditionally been supposed, in a state of economic decline, but recovering from the late eleventh-century crisis, and therefore capable of meeting the increased demands which Manuel made on it; see M.F. Hendy, "Byzantium, 1081-1204: An Economic Reappraisal", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, (1970), 31-52; cf. also I. Sorlin, *TM*, 6 (1976), 391-2: reference to work of Každan; Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XI^e siècle byzantin*, 272-87, 305-9.

¹³⁰ E. Caspar, *Roger II (1101-1154) und die Gründung der Normannisch-Sicilischen Monarchie* (Innsbruck, 1904; reprinted Darmstadt, 1963), *passim* but especially 435-80; aspects of Roger's patronage of Greek culture are considered by V. Laurent, "L'oeuvre géographique du moine sicilien Nil Doxapatris," *Echos d'Orient*, 36 (1937), 5-30; E. Jamison, *Admiral Eugenius of Sicily* (London, 1957).

of *renovatio*.¹³¹ Diplomatic contests with first the one and then the other of these powers affected the nature of Manuel's cultural patronage and imperial propaganda, especially since in either case Manuel was obliged to intervene in Italian politics — intervention which involved negotiation with the papacy and could best be justified in western eyes by emphasising how the Byzantine ruler was the legitimate heir of sovereigns whom the Latins also claimed as their own.

At home, the Comnenian policy, inaugurated by Alexios I, of sharing imperial epithets, privileges, resources among the emperor's relatives had made the family as a whole virtually unshakable, but it created the new danger that the reigning emperor might be eclipsed or eliminated by male relatives who were passed over in the succession but could not be denied substantial consolation prizes, and thus remained influential patrons. The danger increased as the family proliferated, and it was ultimately responsible for every political crisis after 1180. It certainly worried Manuel. He had to assert his authority over an elder brother, as well as a paternal uncle with a long record of disloyalty. The largesse of his early years and his excessive generosity to his family throughout his reign suggest an awareness that his authority was not unchallenged. He constantly felt threatened by his cousin Andronikos, and apparently groundless suspicions led him to ruin one nephew, Alexios Axouch. His sense of insecurity must have been increased by his first wife's failure to produce a son, and by the fact that when Alexios II was born (1169) he himself was fairly advanced in years. Manuel thus had not only to maintain his prestige among his subjects as a whole, but also to make his imperial stature stand out in a crowd of munificent, flamboyant,

¹³¹ On Frederick, see P. Munz, *Frederick Barbarossa* (London, 1969). Frederick's imperial style may or may not have been influenced by Byzantium, but rivalry between the two empires undoubtedly sharpened their respective claims to 'Roman' legitimacy: W. Ohnsorge, "Kaiser Konrad. Zur Geschichte des staufischen Staatsgedankes," *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung*, 4 (1932), 343ff. reprinted in *Abendland und Byzanz* (Bad Homburg, 1963), 364-86; P. Lamma, *Comneni e Staufer*, 116-7, 120-1; P.J. Alexander "The Donation of Constantine at Byzantium and its Earliest Use against the Western Empire", *ZRVI*, 8 (Mélanges G. Ostrogorsky), (1963), part. I, pp. 11-26.

and uncomfortably close relatives. This may help to explain the way in which he drew attention to himself as an individual, and sought inspiration from ages when emperors had kept an awe-inspiring distance between themselves and their subjects.¹³²

The proposition that Manuel projected and defined his imperial role more fully than either of his predecessors is thus supported by evidence that he had both the predisposition and the motive to do so. We may, then, accept that our sources accurately reflect his use of rhetoric, verbal and visual, and that his reign was a period of exceptional activity in medieval Byzantine imperial portraiture. The evident importance which his effective successor, Andronikos I, also attached to pictorial self-advertisement, despite the more limited range of subject-matter at his disposal, may be a further reflection of the extent to which Manuel had promoted the genre. Andronikos had spent most of his life in the cultural milieu of Manuel's court. He belonged to Manuel's generation and displayed much the same combination of characteristics as his cousin — theatricality, incestuous sensuality, virtuosity, captivating charm, and paranoia. That all these traits were exaggerated and idiosyncratic in Andronikos, producing, as a result, a far more over-extended and unbalanced personality, is largely to be explained by the fact that he developed them as a private citizen with a keen sense of frustration at the way in which his own branch of the dynasty had been excluded from the succession. His provocative behaviour to Manuel despite the suspicion which he automatically incurred as son and brother of men who had constituted a dangerous focus of disaffection under John II, and the savagery with which he set out to destroy Manuel's widow, children, and memory, are a measure of the extent to which he was motivated by the feeling that he was his cousin's less fortunate equal and rival. There are thus good reasons for seeing his fairly ambitious cultural patronage, including his self-portraiture, as an

¹³² Choniates, 42-3, 65-6, 78-9, 133ff, 180-9, 266; Cinnamus, 26-7, 31-2, 53-4, 126-30, 265ff; Chalandon, *Jean II Comnène et Manuel I Comnène*, 212-221; Svoronos, *TM*, 1 (1965), 376ff; Lamma, *Comneni e Staufer*, 48, 127, 152-3.

expression of family rivalry.¹³³

The relative abundance of evidence for representations of the next emperor, Isaac II, is largely explained by his propaganda needs; as a usurper whose claim to the Comnenian inheritance was far from preeminent, he had to make the most of the dramatic nature of his accession and the symbolic potential of his family name to emphasize that he held power by divine rather than dynastic right. His choice of propaganda methods cannot, however, have been unrelated to his experience of Manuel's court, at which he had grown up. His lavish building programme and his autocratic handling of church affairs recall Manuel's style of government, and suggest that he regarded this as the imperial norm.¹³⁴

The spate of imperial portraiture which is attested in Byzantium of the mid to late twelfth century may therefore be seen as the result of an effort by Manuel I to boost the imperial image in relation to those external and internal presences which threatened to overshadow it. As we have seen, this effort necessarily involved emphasis on the continuity between the empire of the time and that of the remote Christian past. It is thus highly likely that twelfth-century developments in imperial portraiture were directly inspired by early Byzantine practice. This is not to suggest that twelfth-century patrons revived a dead tradition — the basic imperial portrait, at least, was a permanent feature of the imperial cult — but rather that they exploited a continuous tradition to an extent and perhaps in a style which had not been traditional for a long time.

The difficulty of distinguishing revival from continuity in the Byzantine cultural tradition is suitably illustrated by the opening passage of a twelfth-century imperial epiphany oration delivered by the rhetor John Kamateros; the occasion is not specified, but from internal evidence it would appear to have been the Feast of

¹³³ Choniates, *De Andronico*, *passim*, but especially 333, 349, 363, 428-434, 462-3; Charles Diehl, *Figures byzantines*, II (Paris 1909), Chapter 4; Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 28-9, 38-75, especially 74-5. In his own portraiture, and by disfiguring that of the ex-empress Xene, Andronikos unashamedly vaunted his destructive motives: Choniates, 432-3; Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 234-5; idem, *ZRVI*, 6 (1964), 64.

¹³⁴ Choniates, 565-8, 578-87; Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 100-4.

Epiphany (6 January), 1196.¹³⁵

There is this law among us which is, so to speak, engraved on imperial tablets; for all I know it may exist among certain other nations which come under other governments, but at any rate the Romans have it and it is one of the most laudable. What is this law, and what do I mean by this decree? That emperors be represented in public pictures and appear imposing in these colourful depictions of their purple robes and crowns, and that these may thus raise the imperial majesty to the height of glory. To these icons, to these coloured representations of the imperial insignia, they have chosen to add various things; some have added barbarians being vanquished and slain, others depict Victories hovering above their heads and crowning them, and cities bearing tribute to the emperor on account of this. Others have chosen to depict their well-aimed shots at wild beasts, and to present the various and manifold shapes and figures of animals. The law of our society most commendably ordains these things, in order that everything by which emperors are honoured may be more lasting.

This passage is largely a paraphrase of one by Gregory of Nazianzos,¹³⁶ but most of the statements it makes about the purpose of imperial art and the types of imperial iconography were relevant to the experience of contemporary Byzantines. The fact that Kamateros considered Gregory's words appropriate to his purpose and adapted them without any hint of acknowledgement shows that twelfth-century Byzantines were well aware that recent imperial art perpetuated an ancient tradition, and found this perfectly normal.

This does not mean, however, that they took the tradition for granted in quite the same way as men of the fourth century would

¹³⁵ Regel, *Fontes*, 244; cf. Darrouzès, *Georges et Démétrios Tornikès*, 47, note 17.

¹³⁶ *PG*, 35, cols. 605-6. It is interesting that Kamateros does not echo Gregory's reference to pictures of the emperor "with officials making obeisance". Gregory's descriptions approximate the imperial art of his day, as seen in monuments such as the somewhat later column base of Arcadius: Grabar, *L'Empereur*, pls. XIII-XV. By the twelfth century some of this iconography had changed. For example it is no longer Victories which crown the emperor but angels in several eleventh-century manuscripts: Spatharakis, *Portrait*, figs. 6, 7, 66.

have done. Gregory of Nazianzos wrote against a background where the cult of the emperor and imperial iconography were long established, but the Christian church was then developing its own art and had mixed feelings about the propriety of figural decoration. John Kamateros wrote more than three centuries after the victory over iconoclasm had not only frustrated a powerful effort to prevent Christian holy persons from acquiring the kind of pictorial presence accorded to the emperor, but had also prescribed that icons were necessary aids to orthodox worship; as a result, Christian iconography irrevocably displaced imperial iconography as the mainstream of Byzantine official art, and now it was imperial art which ran the risk of being considered superfluous, blasphemous, or idolatrous. More generally, attitudes and assumptions changed. The diminution of territory and resources, the militarisation of society in response to external crises, and successful ecclesiastical opposition to imperial policies: these trends of the period from the sixth to the ninth century all tended to reduce the Byzantine ruler to more than human proportions and emphasise his duties as opposed to his prerogatives; he came to appear less and less as the gracious host who had made Christianity comfortable in his house, and more and more as the armed custodian of a religious establishment.

Public opinion of the twelfth century may have preferred the emperor *not* to effect the autocratic style of the Constantinian and Justinianic periods. Choniates hints that Manuel and Isaac gave offence, at least to the church, by their high-handed manner of dealing with religious affairs.¹³⁷ It is instructive to quote his comments on Isaac's practice of appropriating sacred treasures to his own use.

To those who offered him the advice that these things he was doing were not becoming to him as a God-loving emperor who had succeeded to the traditional righteousness of his forebears, but were patent sacrilege, he was violent and irritable, and he accused those who spoke in this way of being plainly devoid of intelligence and knowledge of what was right. For he argued that it was permissible for emperors to do anything, and that the distinction between God and a

¹³⁷ Choniates, 274ff, 529ff.

king in the government of earthly affairs was not at all unbridgeable or antithetical, like that between affirmation and negation. Contending that no blame or responsibility attached to what he had done, he introduced the example of Constantine, the first and most powerful of the Christian emperors, who fastened one of the nails by which the Lord of Glory had been pinned to the accursed wood to the bridle of his horse and the other to his helmet. He deliberately overlooked the reason for which the emperor and leader of the faith had adorned himself by these actions, that is, in order to proclaim the Word of the Cross as a divine force to the Hellenes, who thought the preaching of it foolishness.¹³⁸

One wonders, however, if Isaac was altogether wrong in thinking that Constantine could have got away with doing what he had done.

In the world of the High Middle Ages, the universalist, autocratic structure of the Roman imperial tradition was simply out of proportion to the resources and support, however considerable, commanded by contemporary secular monarchs, and itself proved the undoing of every attempt at *renovatio*. The renovated imperial superstructure of twelfth-century Byzantium already showed signs of strain in the last years of Manuel's reign, and it was badly shaken by the events of 1180-1185. Further undermined by the revolt of Peter and Asan (1186), the attempted *coup* of Alexios Branas (1187), and Frederick Barbarossa's roughshod ride through Byzantine territory (1189-1190), much of it collapsed when the magnates of Isaac II's entourage decided to replace him by his brother Alexios (1195). Brought to the throne in ignominious circumstances, snubbed by his wife, obliged to spend his resources in buying internal support and external security, Alexios III began his reign without the conviction or the means to cut a properly imperial figure. He commissioned no major building that we know of, and it is thus not surprising that we lack evidence for pictorial representations of him. In one respect, however, he made a more explicit claim to *renovatio* than any of his predecessors, by having Constantine represented on his coins.¹³⁹ His fortunes began to

¹³⁸ Ibid., 583-4.

¹³⁹ See M.F. Hendy, *Coinage and Money in the Byzantine Empire, 1081-1261* (Washington, 1969), 150-5, 437.

improve in 1200, and the orations addressed to him subsequently by Choniates, Tornikes, and Chrysoberges show that he was not above celebrating his achievements in the traditional way.¹⁴⁰ His cultural patronage might have developed further but for the arrival of the Fourth Crusade in 1203.

The occupation of Constantinople in 1204 by a penurious Latin regime, and the painful reconstruction of Byzantine authority in rival provincial centres further increased the fragmentation of imperial resources and lowered the credibility of imperial claimants, thus leaving even less opportunity for the cultivation of magnificence in the twelfth-century manner. Even the regime to which most Greek loyalties gravitated, that established in western Asia Minor, seems for a long time to have kept a low profile in this respect, partly, no doubt, because of limited resources, partly because imperial style was cramped by exclusion from its natural setting, and partly because of an inevitable reaction against the 'sins' which were considered to have caused God to withdraw his support for the Byzantines. John II Vatatzes, who ruled the Nicaean state for more than half the period of exile (1221-1254), stands in complete contrast to the twelfth-century imperial type, through the reputation which he acquired for making a virtue of 'living off his own', and for submitting to criticism of his private life.¹⁴¹

The recovery of Constantinople in 1261 made another *renovatio* inevitable, and for the next forty years the first two Palaiologan emperors, Michael VIII (1258-1282) and Andronikos II (1282-1328) governed as if the old ideal of imperial autocracy had

¹⁴⁰ Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 130-5; Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, 127-8.

¹⁴¹ Pachymeres, I, 38-9; Gregoras, I, 43-7: cf. also the chronicle attributed to Theodore Skoutariotes, ed. K. Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, 7 (Paris, 1894), 506ff: reproduced by A. Heisenberg, *Georgii Acropolitae opera* (Leipzig, 1903), I, 284-8; M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile. Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea* (Oxford, 1975), 116-7; Nikephoros Blemmydes in PG, 142, cols. 605-9, 613ff, especially 617B.

been fully vindicated by the event.¹⁴² The result was a burst of cultural activity of the traditional kind — the “Last Byzantine Renaissance” — in which imperial palace building and monumental portraiture had their place.¹⁴³ It does not appear, however, that Palaiologan developments in this area can compare with those of the twelfth century, either in scale or in duration. The patronage of late Byzantine art and architecture was less centralized and more dispersed among the aristocratic elite of major cities and the neighboring kingdoms that were under the cultural but not political influence of Byzantium.¹⁴⁴ From the beginning of their rule the Palaiologoi had considerably smaller financial resources than the Komnenoi. Their autocracy was even more unpopular, partly because it originated in a brutal act of usurpation, and partly because it was used by Michael VIII to enforce a highly unpopular religious policy. In these circumstances the idea that the empire was more truly represented by its spiritual than by its secular leaders could only gain ground; with the loss of Asia Minor it became more and more of a reality.

¹⁴² For official statements to this effect, see Pachymeres, I, 153-7; *Manuelis Holoboli orationes*, ed. M. Treu, Programm des Königlichen Victoria-Gymnasiums (Potsdam, 1906), *passim*; F. Miklosich - J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, (Vienna, 1860-90), IV, 345-6; V, 254-5; H. Grégoire, “Imperatoris Michaelis Palaeologi De Vita Sua,” *Byzantion*, 29-30 (1959-60), 457. The Patriarch Germanos II (1265-6) acclaimed Michael as a “Second Constantine” (*Neos Konstantinos*), and Michael adopted this title officially: Pachymeres, I, 300; Heide and Helmut Buschausen, *Die Marienkirche von Apollonia in Albanien* (Vienna, 1976), 153-4. R. Macrides, “The New Constantine and the New Constantinople-1261?,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 6(1980), 13-41.

¹⁴³ Palace buildings: I. and P. Zepos, *Jus Graecoromanum* (Athens, 1931) I, 665; PG, 145, col. 585. Portraiture: Pachymeres, I, 517; II, 234, 614-5 (cf. Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 245-6); Buschausen, *Die Marienkirche*, Chapter IV.

¹⁴⁴ On these matters see the important recent studies of H. Buchthal and H. Belting, *Patronage in Thirteenth-Century Constantinople, An Atelier of Late Byzantine Book Illumination and Calligraphy* (Washington, 1978), 103-104; H. Belting, C. Mango, and D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii) at Istanbul* (Washington, 1978); H. Belting, *Das illuminierte Buch in der Spätbyzantinischen Gesellschaft* (Heidelberg, 1970), 50-71; S. Ćurčić, *Gračanica, King Milutin's Church and Its Place in Late Byzantine Architecture* (University Park, 1979).

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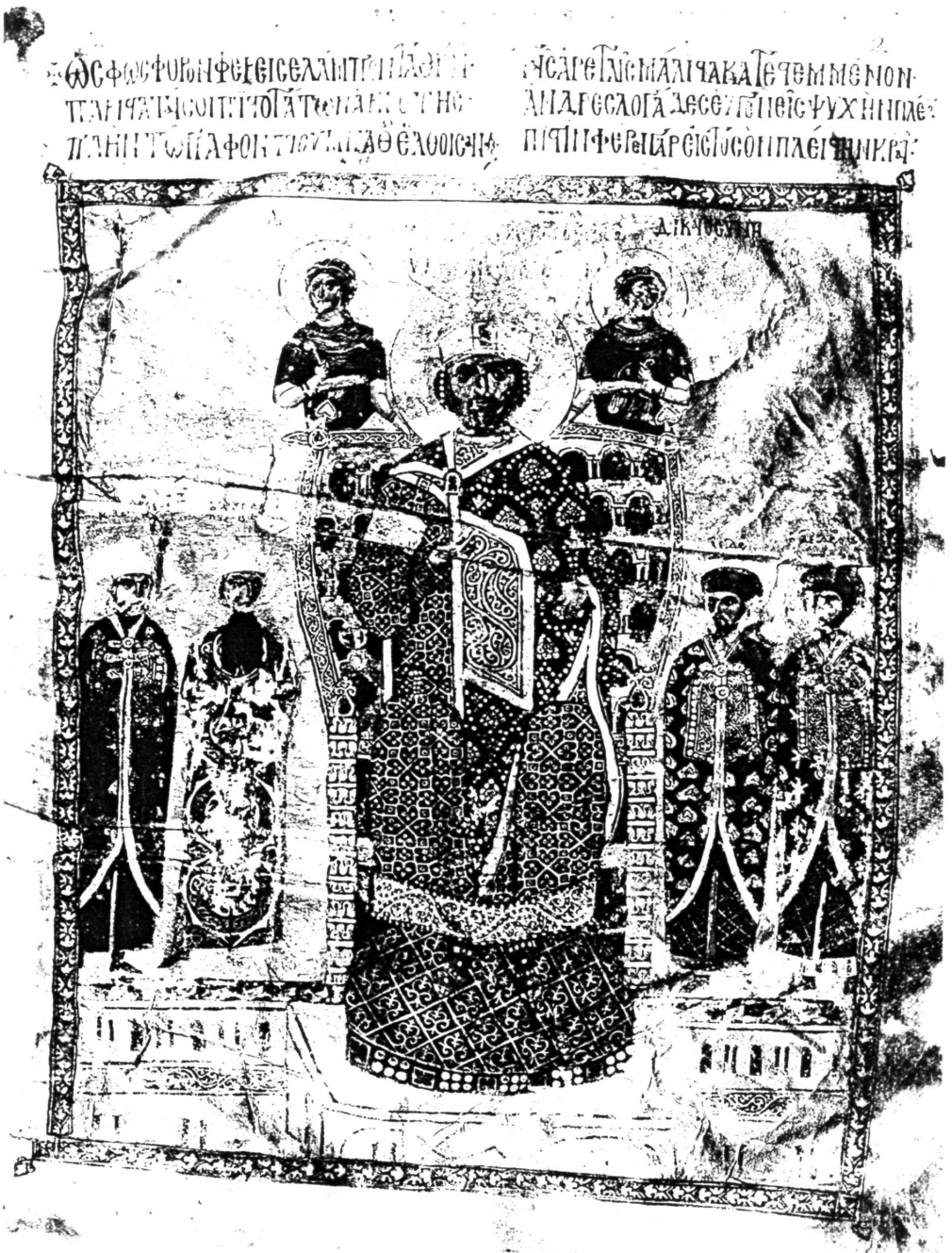
1. The Last Judgement. Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. 74, f. 51v.



2. Manuel I and Maria. Rome, Bibl. Vat. gr. 1176, f. 11r.



3. Nicephoros III and Maria. Paris, Bibl. Nat.-Coislin 79, f. iv.



4. Nicephoros III with virtues and attendants. Paris, Bibl. Nat. Coislin 79, f. 2r.



5. John II and Alexios. Rome, Bibl. Vat. Urb. gr. 2, f. 19v.



6. David with Wisdom and Prophecy. Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. 139, f. 7v.





8. Church Fathers. Rome, Bibl. Vat. gr. 666, f. lv.

ὁ μὲν ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ ἵσταντο
ἐγὼ δὲ σιωπῶντα ἔατο ἡσυχία
ἀλλ' ἄκουσεν καὶ ἠφρονέσθη
ἐξ οὗτος κρανίου τοῦ ἡδὲ ἀσπίδος

2





10. Textile of Bishop Gunther, Bamberg. Drawing after the original by Cahier and Martin (1851).



11. Steatite of St. Demetrios. Moscow, the Kremlin Armory.



12. Histamenon of Isaac I. Washington, Dumbarton Oaks Collection.



13. Hyperpyron of Isaac II. Washington, Dumbarton Oaks Collection.

LEGIO IV MARTIA AND THE LEGIONARY CAMP AT EL-LEJJŪN

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The study of the eastern frontier of the Roman Empire has long been a neglected subject. Surveys conducted over a half century ago and a few excavations, such as at Dura-Europus, illustrated the potential of the military sites of the East. In recent years renewed interest has been aroused in the eastern frontier; current or planned archaeological projects in eastern Turkey, Syria, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia have begun to fill in a still spotty picture. The study of the Roman legions in the East has been hampered by the relative scarcity of legionary *castra*, because the legions were normally garrisoned in the cities of the more urbanized eastern provinces. Though rare, a few legionary camps do exist along the eastern frontier, and therefore these sites are of paramount importance.

One of these sites is the camp at el-Lejjūn, which formed part of the *limes* of Arabia (now mostly within the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan). Lejjūn is located ca. 60 kilometers east of the Dead Sea in central Jordan and was rediscovered and described by European explorers in the 19th century. By far the most important of these early investigators were R. Brünnow and A. von Domaszewski, who reached the site in 1897 and published a description, photographs, and plans of the camp more than seventy years ago.¹ An earlier

The following abbreviations are used in this paper:

PA R. Brünnow and A. von Domaszewski, *Die Provincia Arabia*, 3 vols. (Strassburg, 1904-09).

PAES Butler, H. C., *et. al.*, *Princeton Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1904-5 and 1909*.

PEFQS *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*.

ZDPV *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palaestina-Vereins*.

¹ PA vol. 2, 24-38. The account of Brünnow and von Domaszewski includes the descriptions of earlier explorers.

visitor to the site, Charles Doughty, had already suggested that “Lejjūn” was an Arabic corruption of the Latin “*legio*”² But Brünnow and Domaszewski were apparently the first scholars to suggest that Lejjūn had been garrisoned by *legio* IV *Martia*.³ This identification, although not certain, has become widely accepted. Nelson Glueck identified a major Early Bronze fortress one kilometer west of the Roman camp in the 1930’s; he also published the first aerial photo of the Roman camp.⁴ No further investigation of the camp occurred until the late 1970’s.

Parker first visited the site in June of 1975, while conducting a feasibility study for a proposed survey of the *Limes Arabicus*. A sample of surface potsherds was collected and the site photographed. The following year, in August and September of 1976, the survey of the entire frontier was conducted. The survey team covered most of the major military sites in Jordan, from the Syrian border in the north to the Gulf of Aqaba in the south, a total of 41 sites. Lejjūn was surveyed on August 31, 1976. A larger sample of sherds was collected, more photographs were taken, and several adjacent sites were surveyed. The site and region were the objects of further study in 1979.⁵

² C. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1888) vol. 1, 20.

³ *PA* vol. 2, 36.

⁴ N. Glueck, *The Other Side of the Jordan* (Cambridge, MA, 1970) 170 (fig. 83). This photo was originally published in Glueck’s *Explorations in Eastern Palestine*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1934-51).

⁵ The survey was sponsored by the American Schools of Oriental Research and was aided by its affiliate in Amman, the American Center of Oriental Research. For the initial results of the survey, cf. S. T. Parker, “Archaeological Survey of the *Limes Arabicus*: A Preliminary Report”, *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan* 21 (1976) 19-31. The staff of the 1976 survey consisted of S. Thomas Parker as director, James A. Sauer as ceramic typologist, Frank L. Koucky as geologist, and Paul M. McDermott as photographer. In July and August of 1979 Parker and Koucky returned to the site, and were joined by James Lander. Mr. Lander wrote the section of this paper on the architectural evidence; Mr. Parker is responsible for the sections on the topography, the pottery, and the historical conclusions.

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The purpose of this paper is to analyze the topography of the site, review the associated archaeological evidence from Lejjūn and several related sites, and draw some conclusions concerning this camp, its garrison, and the history of this sector of the frontier.

I. Topography (see fig. 1)

The site is located in the hill country of Biblical Moab in central Jordan, approximately 135 kilometers south of Amman and 24 kilometers west of the railroad station at Qatrana. A good asphalt road leads westward from Qatrana towards Karak. Nearly halfway between Qatrana and Karak is a narrow paved road which extends northward for two kilometers before reaching Lejjūn.⁶ The camp is situated at an elevation of ca. 700 meters above sea level; it lies in a shallow valley formed by the Wadi Lejjūn and the Wadi Mūjib and is surrounded by low hills on all sides but the east. The hills effectively cut off summer breezes but also provide good protection from the elements in the winter months (see fig. 2). To the northwest of the camp the Wadi Lejjūn narrows and has cut a steep canyon with walls nearly 100 meters high. At the point where the wadi begins to narrow is the main water source of the site: a perennial spring ('Ain Lejjūn) which today provides enough water for summer pasture and irrigated crops. In a semi-arid region such as this, the presence of the spring was probably a major factor in selecting the location of the camp. The major surface geologic formation is the Belqa Series limestone, deposited in the Cretaceous period. Several igneous intrusions of more recent date dot the area.⁷ The rich but thin loess soil of the valley still produces good winter pasture for livestock.⁸

Access to the site is somewhat limited by the surrounding hills. Approach from the north and west is difficult because of the steep sides of the Wadi Lejjūn. The route from the south along the modern road is somewhat easier but approach from the east seems easiest because it is not blocked by hills. A watchtower, Rujm Beni Yasser,

⁶ See map, fig. 1. Location coordinates on the Palestine grid are 2324-2328/0716-0720.

⁷ D. J. Burdon, *Handbook of the Geology of Jordan* (Amman, 1959) 41-49.

⁸ We are indebted to Frank L. Koucky for much of this topographic data.

on an isolated hill due east of the camp guarded against any approach and also served as the hub of a complex system of signalling and observation posts that extended towards the desert to the east. Another of these watchtowers guarded the easiest crossing of the Wadi Mūjib, a point now used by the modern highway some two kilometers southeast of the camp. To the northwest of the camp there is only one easy crossing point across the Wadi Lejjūn. This is near the spring where the modern track crosses the wadi and climbs its northern cliff. The presence of a badly ruined watchtower above the north bank suggests that this crossing was also used in antiquity. About one kilometer west of the spring is the *castellum* of Khirbet el-Fityān, which controls access into the valley from the north and west and commands an excellent view in all directions. This fort will be discussed more fully below.

II. Architecture

The information gleaned from direct observation of the existing ruins of Lejjūn can be supplemented by the descriptions of 19th century travellers, primarily the careful 1897 survey of Brünnow and Domaszewski.⁹ The admirable plans drawn by Domaszewski are still the best available, though some of his reconstructions may be overly influenced by the evidence from the "twin" camp at Udhruh, whose defenses are much better preserved.¹⁰ The camp of Lejjūn is a rectangle (240 × 190 meters, excluding tower projections) whose walls enclose an area of 4.6 ha., or about 25% of the areal norm for legionary fortresses in Britain.¹¹ The proportion of length to width, about 5:4, is more squarish than the 3:2 suggested by Ps.-Hyginus

⁹ *PA* vol. 2, 24-38. Other early accounts include C. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, vol. 1, 20; F. J. Bliss, "Narrative of an Expedition to Moab and Gilead in 1895", *PEFQS* (1895) 222ff.; S. Vailhe, "Dans les Montagnes Bleues", *Echos de Notre-Dame Biblique* 7 (1896) 234-236; H. Vincent, "Notes de voyage", *Revue Biblique* 7 (1898) 437; A. Hornstein, "A Visit to Kerak and Petra", *PEFQS* (1898) 97; and L. Gautier, "Autour de la Mer Morte", *Le Globe* 11 (1900) 101-103.

¹⁰ *PA* vol. 2, 25. For his account of Udhruh, cf. *PA* vol. 1, 433-460.

¹¹ S. Frere, *Britannia* (London, 2nd ed. 1974) 253; R. P. Duncan-Jones, "Pay and Numbers in Diocletian's Army", *Chiron* 8 (1978) 554.

(ch. 21), yet many legionary fortresses were broader.¹² The camp is oriented roughly towards the points of the compass, perhaps done less in obedience to convention than in desire to position a long side of the camp next to the Wadi Lejjūn (which runs west to east).¹³

The Enclosure Wall

The enclosure wall is 2.4 meters in width: comparable to late Roman enclosure walls in Europe.¹⁴ The greatest extant height is about 4 meters; at present no information is available on the original height or the arrangements for parapet or crenellation. The wall construction is of a rubble core between two faces of roughly squared stones set in level courses which vary between 0.20 m. and 0.50 m. in height. The constructional material is mostly limestone with some use of chert and basalt (There is some evidence of quarrying in the wadi, near the spring). The rubble core is set in mud or clay; the stones of the two wall faces are bonded with a gypsum mortar flecked with bits of charcoal.¹⁵ Although harder lime mortars are also present on the site, the prevalence of gypsum in the enclosure wall probably accounts for the collapse of most of the curtain wall down to a level where it is protected and buttressed by its own rubble. The enclosure wall, though segmented on Domaszewski's plan by the

¹² Pseudo-Hyginus, *Des Fortifications du Camp*, ed. M. Lenoir (Paris, 1979) 26. For comparisons of fort proportions, see R. Rebuffat in *Thamusida I*, ed. J. P. Morel, *et al.* (Paris, 1965) 136-142; also cf. H. von Petrikovits, *Die Innenbauten römischer Legionslager während der Prinzipatszeit* (Opladen, 1975) 113ff.

¹³ O.A. W. Dilke, *Roman Land Surveyors* (Newton Abbot, 1971) 86. The first section, now missing, of Pseudo-Hyginus' work may have dealt with orientation.

¹⁴ H. von Petrikovits, "Fortifications in the North-Western Roman Empire", *JRS* 61 (1971) 197.

¹⁵ The edge of a large area of gypsiferous marl is located within a few hundred meters of Lejjūn.

The presence of charcoal in the gypsum mortar may indicate some hastiness in preparing the gypsum or it may be simply one ingredient of the mortar. There is a parallel in the city wall of Ashkalon in Palestine, which has been dated to the 3rd century A.D.; cf. B. Z. Kedar and W. G. Mook, "Radiocarbon Dating of Mortar from the City Wall of Ashkalon", *Israel Exploration Journal* 28 (1978) 173-176.

entrances to the towers, is continuous, with the towers bonded into it. Therefore, the wall and towers appear to have been a simultaneous construction.

The Interval Towers

The twenty interval towers are U-shaped and project about 11 m. from the enclosure wall (see fig. 4). The width of the towers varies between 7.80 and 9.90 m., with 8.70 m. as the average. The walls of the towers are about 2 m. in width and are of the same general construction as the curtain wall, into which the towers are bonded. The towers were originally of two stories, with the upper story supported by the barrel vaulted roof of the lower. The recessed ground level entrance is clear, but we do not yet know the arrangement for the passage (if any) between stories nor the exit on to the enclosure wall. Domaszewski suggested the existence of stairways direct to the curtain wall and separate from the towers, but the evidence is unclear.¹⁶ It is uncertain whether there were once windows or slits through the walls of the lowest story because at present the evidence is buried; the evidence for such openings in the upper stories may be lost. Still, we may assume that the curtain wall and gates were carefully enfiladed. Except where they flank the gates, the interval towers are spaced at roughly regular intervals, averaging about 28 m. (with extremes of 24.50 m. and 31 m.). The spacing of the towers flanking the gates is interesting because the disposition seemingly ignores the size of the gates. This may indicate that the disposition of the towers was planned before the decision was made to erect two triple-entry gates somewhat asymmetrically.

Apart from examples at Udhruh, the parallels for this U-shaped tower are found primarily on the lower Danube and are mostly dated

¹⁶ *PA* vol. 2, 30-31.

to the late 3rd and early 4th centuries.¹⁷ A comparison has also been made between Lejjūn's interval towers and those of the late 3rd century British fort at Portchester.¹⁸ It can also be noted that in the East such towers do have antecedents in Greek and Hellenistic fortifications.¹⁹

The Angle Towers

Each angle tower is basically a circle with a diameter of ca. 19 m. (see fig. 5). However, before the tower wall begins to curve it initially projects, at a right angle to the curtain wall, on a straight line for about 6 m. This part of the tower wall is 1.80 m. wide, while the part which curves is 2 m in width, the same thickness as the interval towers.

Domaszewski's investigation of the angle towers was restricted by the presence of bedouin burials (still a ticklish feature of the site) and thus his reconstruction owes much to the clearer evidence of Udhruh.²⁰ If, however, the analogy holds, then the ground level of Lejjūn's angle towers would have a single entrance, an internal stairway to the upper level, and exits on to the two conjoining segments of the curtain wall at that level. Unlike Udhruh, the ground floor has three (not four) chambers. According to Domaszewski's reconstruction,²¹ the angle towers were at least 11 m. in height, but no

¹⁷ For Iatrus, cf. T. Ivanov, "Ausgrabungen im Kastell Iatrus in den Jahren 1958-1962", *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms* (Köln, 1967) 154; also see K. Wachtel, "Zum gegenwertigen Forschungsstand der Kastellgrabung Iatros", *Actes du XIe Congress international d'études sur les frontières romaines*, ed. D. M. Pippidi (Köln, 1974) 139.

For Tropaeum Traiani, cf. Ivanov, 155 (plan: 156).

For Capidava, cf. G. Florescu *et al.*, *Capidava* (Bucharest, 1958) 27.

For Dinogetia, cf. G. Stefan *et al.*, *Dinogetia I* (Bucharest, 1967).

For Labidia, cf. A. S. Stefan, "Recherches de photo-interpretation archéologique", in Pippidi (ed.) 105 (cf. pls. 21-22).

¹⁸ C. Dalton, "Note on Dr. Bliss' Lejjun in Moab", *PEFQS* (1895) 332-333. On the date of Portchester see S. Johnson, *The Roman Forts of the Saxon Shore* (London, 1976) 59-62. B. W. Cunliffe, *Portchester I* (Dorking, 1975), 197.

¹⁹ F. E. Winter, *Greek Fortifications* (London, 1971) 192-203.

²⁰ *PA* vol. 2, 27.

²¹ *PA* vol. 2, 28, figs. 582-583.

information is yet available regarding the arrangement and use of the roof. Again we lack evidence concerning windows or slits.

Close parallels for angle towers of this shape exist in Syria,²² but the underlying principles (of presenting a convex face to the enemy while maintaining a section of straight wall perpendicular to, and enfiling, the curtain wall) were at work throughout much of the fortifications of the Late Empire. Notable examples include the "fan" and "horseshoe" shaped angle towers on forts of the Danubian frontier.²³

The Gates

Of the four gates, two are provided with a single entrance and two are triple entry (i.e., a central passageway with smaller entrances to either side). The latter two gates are the *porta praetoria* and the *porta principalis sinistra* (east and north, respectively). Domaszewski explained this orientation by the fact that the north gate is nearest the spring and the east gate is directed against the enemy, and thus they received the most traffic.²⁴ Actually the south gate, the *porta principalis dextra*, faces the more likely approach of any enemy, though Roman marching order may have been best facilitated through the *porta praetoria*. It must be noted, however, that troops and transport could have passed through even the smallest of the four gates,²⁵ and so the location of the triple entry gates perhaps was intended to facilitate normal pedestrian traffic. Even with all four main gates closed, the side entrances would permit movement to and from the spring to the north and the large *vicus* and irrigated areas to the east. Another consideration, of course, would be the route of the Roman road presumed to run between Areopolis (modern Rabba) and Lejjūn, though its entrance into the Lejjūn

²² A. Poidebard, *La Trace de Rome dans le désert de Syrie* (Paris, 1934): Manqoura (pl. 21), Qattar (pl. 39), Hallabat (pl. 41) and Abyad (pl. 43).

²³ A. Mócsy, "Pannonia", *RE Sup* vol. 9, cols 636-637. Cf. Petrikovits, "Fortifications", 199.

²⁴ *PA* vol. 2, 34; Pseudo-Hyginus, 56: *porta praetoria semper hostem spectare debet*.

²⁵ Gate widths: north = 3.4 m.; south = 3.29 m.; east = 3.83 m.; west = 2.53 m.

valley has not yet been located.

Little can be said about the unexcavated remains of the four gates. A common feature of construction is the use of fossiliferous limestone monoliths, carefully cut and set without mortar, for both uprights and lintels.

The relieving arches above the lintels, reported by Bliss,²⁶ no longer exist; nor could we find any convincing blocks for this feature in the rubble. But lintels with relieving arches are much in evidence at Udhruh.

Each gate is centered in its wall of the camp; the *viae* which connect the gates, but for the obstruction of the *principia*, effectively divide the camp into four equal quarters.

Internal Arrangements

This equal quartering by a cruciform street plan is *not* a characteristic of legionary camps of the Principate;²⁷ and, whatever else it may represent, this arrangement does indicate a break with the marching camp convention of placing the *principia* (for security and ease of communication) in the center of the site. With the smaller scale of late Roman fortifications and with the emphasis now on manning a perimeter rather than organizing a marching-order, there are alterations of barracks, streets, and the *principia* of late camps. At Lejjūn there is no sign of a *via quintana* and the *principia* is not centralized exactly. It seems that, in late Roman fortification generally, this new street plan takes precedence over the *principia* in terms of location.²⁸

Domaszewski argued that in an early phase Lejjūn was traversed by several minor streets aligned with the entrances to interval

²⁶ Bliss, "Narrative", 221.

²⁷ Petrikovits, *Innenbauten*, 114-115 and n. 141, compares Lejjūn, Udhruh, Palmyra, Drobeta, and Diocletian's palace at Spalato as examples of a Byzantine layout as proposed in the Anonymous *περί ἀπλήκτου* (*Incerti scriptoris Byzantini saeculi X Liber de re militari*, ed. R. Vári, Leipzig, 1901).

²⁸ This is shown in the paradigms drawn up (to argue a different point) by R. Fellmann, "Der Diokletianspalast von Split im Rahmen der spätromischen Militärarchitektur", *Antike Welt*, Heft 2 (1979) 47-55.

towers.²⁹ This suggestion not only calls for a liberal interpretation of the existing plan, but also requires some evidence for significant architectural phasing of the barracks. Although our own examination of the construction of the barrack walls found some irregularities, the nature of these gives no particular support to Domaszewski's suggestion. The matter requires testing by excavation.

The Principia

The headquarters building at Lejjūn is perplexing in both its evidence of rebuilding and its present stage of dilapidation. It is conventionally positioned where the *via praetoria* meets the *via principalis*, but the location of the latter street forces the *principia* off the central point in the camp. That point, which could properly be called the *groma*,³⁰ was marked by a tetrapyle (now lost from view) which served as the monumental entrance to the *principia*.³¹

The *principia* is relatively large (64 × 41 m.). The actual size of the central courtyard cannot yet be stated. Domaszewski's plan (see fig. 3) shows only a simple wall enclosing a courtyard, the main range of rooms along the west wall, and three small apsidal rooms near the southwest corner. There is no indication of a portico, colonnade, or chambers along the other walls surrounding the central courtyard. There is also no sign of a transverse hall between the courtyard and the main rooms at the rear of the complex. However, in 1979 we discovered faint traces of walls (still too indistinct to plan) projecting internally from the courtyard wall for several meters. The northern courtyard enclosure wall does not align with the north wall of the main range of rooms; further evidence for rebuilding is seen in the three apsidal rooms (*scholae*?) in the southwest corner of the

²⁹ PA vol. 2, 36.

³⁰ Pseudo-Hyginus, 12; Hyginus Gromaticus, *de limitibus constituendis*, in F. Blume, ed., *Die Schriften der römischen Feldmesser* (Berlin, 1848) 180. For examples of *gromae* in the Principate, cf. Petrikovits, *Innenbauten*, 75 (and bibliography in n. 78).

³¹ Vailhe (n. 1), 235; PA vol. 2, 35.

principia.³² These rooms are almost certainly a later and rather cramped addition to the main structure. Domaszewski's plan of the northwest corner of the *principia* may be slightly in error, but only excavation will throw real light on the problems involved with this structure.

Internal Structures

Several of Domaszewski's important identifications of internal structures deserve to be noted and supplemented with some corroborative material. A basilical building near the north gate was said to be the *praetorium*,³³ though it may be a secondary construction, perhaps a church. A heap of rubble beyond the northwest corner of the *principia* (barely traced on the plan) was identified as the *armamentarium*.³⁴ In the northwest corner of the camp Domaszewski identified a circular depression in the ground, over 12 m. in diameter, as a *basilica exercitatoria equestris*. If so, it is a small one;³⁵ it might as easily be a collapsed cistern. In the southwest corner of the camp Domaszewski reported seeing a large structure built upon arches (no longer visible); he suggested it was a *horreum*.³⁶ Though unbuttressed, the walls appear to be thick, and an examination of the mortar revealed the same charcoal-flecked gypsum material found in the enclosure wall. The location of this structure near the highest elevation in the camp is further evidence in support of Domaszewski's identification. Confirmation of his suggestion awaits excavation.

The Barracks

Most of the remaining structures within the camp were considered

³² *PA* vol. 2, 34. On *scholae* cf. Petrikovits, "Die Spezialgebäude römischer Legionslager", *Legio VII Gemina* (Léon, 1970) 239-241.

³³ *PA* vol. 2, 35.

³⁴ *PA* vol. 2, 34. Domaszewski's suggested identification was based on analogy with the well preserved *armamentarium* at ed-Dumer (*PA* vol. 3, 186-188) in southern Syria. Cf. Petrikovits, "Spezialgebäude", 235-236.

³⁵ *PA* vol. 2, 35; cf. Petrikovits, *Innenbauten*, 80-81.

³⁶ *PA* vol. 2, 35.

barracks by Domaszewski. If so, they show a great deal more variation than barracks of the Principate. There is no doubt that the eastern half of the camp is filled by six barrack blocks for ordinary ranks.³⁷ Four of these blocks show a similar layout: a central spine wall with pairs of rooms abutting on each side. Two other blocks, flanking the *via praetoria*, consist of a spine wall into which are bonded the larger rooms facing the street; behind are pairs of the more regular sized rooms abutting the spine. In all six blocks the three rooms nearest the *via principalis* are somewhat larger and are no doubt centurions' quarters. The differentiation in size between rooms of centurions and those of the rank and file pales, however, when compared to legionary camps of the Principate.

The primary construction of the barracks is rough compared to the enclosure wall.³⁸ The walls, ca. 0.80 m. thick, consist of two faces of roughly squared stone encasing a rubble core; they are held together by a gypsum mortar and were originally faced by a gypsum plaster. The present stage of collapse precludes a simple examination of door passages, though it seems clear that there was no communication through the central spine wall.

If we apply the convention of one pair of rooms for each *contubernium*, then the two central barrack blocks with only three rooms across pose a problem. A portico facing both of these blocks where they face the *via praetoria* would ease the difficulty and be traditional, but at present there is no sign of a portico.³⁹

³⁷ The blank area in the northeastern corner of Domaszewski's plan remains a mystery. The area is devoid of rubble which could indicate that barracks once stood here. Domaszewski's plan pre-dates the Late Ottoman settlement (which apparently led to considerable stone robbing of the camp). This is the lowest portion of the camp, however, and deposition caused by ponding may have covered these blocks.

³⁸ This was interpreted by Domaszewski (*PA* vol. 2, 36) as evidence of a later phase of construction. But Petrikovits (*Innenbauten*, n. 4) counters this argument with the example of differing but contemporary constructions at Lauriacum.

³⁹ No column bases are indicated on Domaszewski's plan (see fig. 3), and we have found only one column drum fragment on the entire site. The single fragment was found near the reported tetrastyle (see no. 31 above).

In general, then, it seems that a centurial block at Lejjūn consisted of 18 pairs of rooms, the first three being centurions' quarters and the remaining 15 occupied by ordinary troops. The Principate norm of 11 to 13 rooms is exceeded slightly in this instance, though the significance of this is unknown.⁴⁰ If we assume that each conventional eight man *contubernium* occupied a pair of rooms, then the sleeping space for each man would have been about two square meters, which is comparable to the Principate norm.⁴¹

Other Structures inside the Camp

Immediately north and south of the *principia* are groups of rooms which Domaszewski briefly compared to the barrack blocks in the eastern half of the camp.⁴² The blocks to the south of the *principia* vary considerably in their arrangement and room size, but in general these rooms are larger than those in the eastern blocks. This accords with the relative size and traditional location of the barracks of the first cohort in camps of the Principate.⁴³ But it is difficult to imagine how a full size cohort (much less a double cohort) could squeeze into the number of rooms available.

It is unlikely that the rooms north of the *principia* are barracks. The rooms attached to the northern courtyard wall are probably offices or storerooms. The row of barrack-sized rooms along the *via principalis* might have sheltered a special unit of *immunes* or cavalrymen (or, less likely, their mounts);⁴⁴ but equally they could be

⁴⁰ Petrikovits, *Innenbauten*, 36-38, 59-60. Lauriacum and Inchtuthil have 14 or more pairs of non-centurial rooms, but both forts might (for different reasons) be excluded from the Principate norm (cf. Petrikovits, *Innenbauten*, 60, 119-121).

⁴¹ Petrikovits, *Innenbauten*, 36.

⁴² *PA* vol. 2, 35-36.

⁴³ Petrikovits, *Innenbauten*, 38; Pseudo-Hyginus, 3 and 36.

⁴⁴ Although the legionary cavalry by the 4th century were detached as independent units (*equites promoti*) stationed apart from the legion, a limited number of mounted soldiers probably were required at the legionary bases. This row of rooms along the *via principalis* may be stables, although the rooms are very near (and up-wind of!) the *principia*. Horses may have been kept in the *retentura* or even outside the camp.

fabricae or storerooms.

Finally, a rectangular structure near tower XII on Domaszewski's plan (see fig.3) is well placed for use as a latrine: down slope from the possible cisterns near towers III, VIII, and XV and near the lowest point within the camp.

External Structures

There are traces of structures outside the walls of the camp in all directions but the north. These traces suggest that a sizable *vicus* grew up around the camp, especially towards the east and south. Most of these areas have been covered quite recently by expanding agriculture, although the ruins of two or three heavier structures have been left exposed thus far. One of these, located near the western wall of the camp, consists of ranges of rooms built around a central courtyard (see fig.6). This building, 35×28 m., remains an enigma; suggestions of its purpose range from a *mansio*, *praetorium* (since none has been identified convincingly within the camp), or accommodation for married officers.⁴⁵

Finally, an important structure on a hill overlooking the camp from the west was photographed and planned by Brünnow and Domaszewski in 1897.⁴⁶ But by 1934, when Nelson Glueck examined the area, the structure had disappeared.⁴⁷ It was a large platform of coursed masonry, 21 meters square and approached via staircases on both the east and west sides. Dubbed the "altar" by Domaszewski, this structure stood some 3.50 m. in height. Glueck noticed similar structures at Ekhwein el-Khadem and Museitiba and suggested they functioned as cultic centers during the Nabatean period.⁴⁸ Though no Nabatean pottery was found at the camp itself, sherds of Nabatean date were recovered from Khirbet el-Fityān and Rujm Beni Yasser. Both sites are within two kilometers of Lejjūn.

⁴⁵ Vailhe, 235, calls the structure a "fortin".

⁴⁶ *PA* vol. 2, 36-38.

⁴⁷ N. Glueck, *Explorations in Eastern Palestine*, 4 vols. (New Haven, 1934-51) vol. 1, 40.

⁴⁸ Glueck, vol. 1, 42-44, cf. pl. 8.

Therefore, the suggestion of Glueck seems possible. The hill is now occupied by a Late Ottoman domestic complex and a school (once an Ottoman police station). The construction of these buildings out of well cut, weathered blocks seems enough explanation for the disappearance of the "altar". This more recent building activity by the Turkish settlers may also account for the otherwise unaccountable evidence of stone robbing from the camp itself.

In summary, the rectangular plan of the camp of Lejjūn, the number and locational symmetry of the gates, and the general arrangement of the barrack blocks show continuity with legionary fortresses of the Principate. However, the relatively small area enclosed, the strength of the enclosure wall, the projection of the towers (which are not entirely regular in their size and spacing), the cruciform street plan, and the variations in the size and layout of the barracks all suggest that this camp postdates those of the Principate. The architectural evidence rather suggests a late 3rd or early 4th century date.

III. The Pottery

The recent development of a more refined ceramic typology for the Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic periods in Trans-Jordan, when combined with other evidence, permits a reconstruction of the occupational history of Lejjūn. The chronological system of J.A. Sauer, developed from the excavations at Heshbon (ca. 60 kilometers north of Lejjūn), was controlled by associated numismatic evidence.⁴⁹ The periods relevant to this study are presented below:

Early Roman I	ca. 63-37 B.C.
Early Roman II	ca. 37-4 B.C.
Early Roman III	ca. 4 B.C. - A.D. 73
Early Roman IV	ca. 73-135
Late Roman I	ca. 135-192
Late Roman II	ca. 193-235
Late Roman III	ca. 235-284

⁴⁹ J. A. Sauer, *Heshbon Pottery 1971* (Berrien Springs, MI, 1973).

Late Roman IV	ca. 284-324
Early Byzantine I	ca. 324-363
Early Byzantine II	ca. 363-392
Early Byzantine III	ca. 392-450
Early Byzantine IV	ca. 450-491
Late Byzantine I	ca. 491-527
Late Byzantine II	ca. 527-565
Late Byzantine III	ca. 565-614
Late Byzantine IV	ca. 614-640

During the initial visit to the site in 1975 a sample of 549 sherds was collected from within the walls of the camp. The sample taken in 1976 was nearly twice as large (1,050 sherds) and included some sherds from outside the camp. The most striking fact about this ceramic corpus is its date: over 99% of the total sample dates to the Late Roman IV through Early Byzantine IV periods (ca. 284-491). Of the remaining sherds, there were a few Iron Age (1200-600 B.C.), nine Early Roman IV, three Late Byzantine I, two Umayyad (A.D. 661-750), and three Ottoman (1516-1918).

The discovery of two surface coins within the camp provides some confirmation for the dating of the pottery. Both coins were bronze issues of Constantine (306-337).

Analysis of the Pottery^{49a}

^{49a} Bibliography of sites for ceramic parallels:

Amman Roman Tomb: Harding, G. L., "A Roman Family Vault on Jebel Jofeh, Amman", *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities of Palestine* 14 (1950) 81-94.

Beth She'arim: Avigad, N., "Excavations at Beth She'arim, 1954", *Israel Exploration Journal* 5 (1955) 205-239.

Dhibān: Tushingham, A. D., *The Excavations at Dibon (Dhibān) in Moab* (Cambridge, MA, 1972).

Heshbon: Sauer, J. A., *Heshbon Pottery 1971* (Berrien Springs, MI, 1973).

Jerash: Fisher, S., and McCown, C., "Jerash-Gerasa 1930", *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 11 (1931).

Judean Desert Caves:

Expedition A: Avigad, N., "Expedition A", *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962) 169-183.

Nahal Hever: Aharoni, Y., "The Caves of Nahal Hever", *Atiqot* 3 (1961) 148-162.

Late Roman Pottery: Hayes, J., *Late Roman Pottery* (London, 1972).

The Early Roman IV pottery from Lejjūn is represented by Sherds 1, 7, 25 (see fig. 8). Sherd 1 is a closed cooking pot with a rounded, slightly thickened rim. It is well fired and is covered with a brown slip. Possible parallels have been published from the *Judean Desert Caves* (*Expedition A*, fig. 5:15; *Nahal Hever*, fig. 10:9). Sherd 7 is a jar rim with a fairly straight neck and a flattened, thickened lip. Sherd 25, of well fired red ware, is a ring base, probably of a shallow bowl or plate.

Sherds 2-4, from the Late Roman IV period, represent closed cooking pots, all displaying the characteristic grooved rim. All three sherds are well fired and are of yellowish brown or gray ware. Published parallels for these forms include *Heshbon* (fig. 2:46, 47, 49, 50), *Rujm el Melfuf* (figs. 24, 25), *Amman Roman Tomb* (pl. 26:12, 105), *Jerash* (pl.2) and *Umm el-Jimāl* (sherds 1-2). Handles of these cooking pots are pictured as Sherds 30-33, which display characteristic pinched cross sections. Handles of this type have been found at *Heshbon* (fig. 2:82, 83), *Rujm el-Malfuf* (figs. 24, 25) and *Umm el-Jimāl* (6-7). Sherds 15-17 represent Late Roman bowl rims. Sherd 15 may be compared to possible parallels from *Rujm el-Malfuf* (fig. 38) and *Heshbon* (fig. 2:67).

Early Byzantine cooking pots are represented by Sherds 5-6; both have rounded, slightly thickened rims and a brown exterior slip. Similar closed forms have been found at *Heshbon* (fig. 2:85-87), *Tell er-Ras* (fig. 11:3-5), and *Beth She 'arim* (fig. 3:12). Both the Lejjūn examples probably date to the 4th century. Sherds 8-12 represent Early Byzantine jugs and jars. All but Sherd 10 are of well fired finely levigated ware with very small inclusions. Sherd 10 displays a dark interior core, suggesting it was less well fired. The rims vary from the simple rounded rim of Sherd 10 to the complex rim of Sherd 8. A possible parallel to Sherd 9 is attested at *Tell er-Ras* (fig. 10:1-2).

Rujm el-Malfuf: Boraas, R. S., "A Preliminary Sounding at Rujm el-Malfuf, 1969", *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan* 16 (1971) 31-45.

Tell er-Ras: Bull, R. J., and Campbell, E. F., "The Sixth Campaign at Balātah (Shechem)", *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 190 (1968) 2-41.

Umm el-Jimāl: Parker, S. T., "The Pottery from the 1977 Season", forthcoming in B. DeVries (ed.), *The Umm el-Jimāl Excavations*.

although with a slightly different stance). Sherd 14 represents a deep krater of light brown ware, probably of the 4th century. It is similar to several unpublished examples from *Umm el-Jimāl*. Early Byzantine bowl forms are illustrated by Sherds 18-24. Sherd 24 is an imported red ware bowl, probably of the 5th century. Published parallels include J. Hayes, *Late Roman Pottery* (fig. 18:3, 5) and *Heshbon* (fig. 3:99). Sherd 18 displays a red slip which may be a local imitation of a Red Ware bowl. This form is paralleled at *Beth She'arim* (fig. 3:18). An unusual form is represented by Sherd 23; its ware and exterior brown slip suggest a Byzantine date. An Early Byzantine ring base, probably from a jug, is represented by Sherd 26. Sherds 34-36 illustrate cross sections of handles of the period.

A few sherds of Late Byzantine I date were also found at the site. Sherd 13 is a juglet with a rounded, slightly everted rim and a ridge along the neck. It is not well fired and is covered by a reddish brown slip. A close parallel to this juglet is from *Dhibān* (fig. 12:6-7). The handle section of Sherd 37 is attached to a jug rim and is paralleled at *Heshbon* (fig. 3:102).

The Umayyad period (661-750) is represented by Sherd 28: a cup with an everted, tapering rim. Sherds 27 and 29 are of the Ottoman period. Sherd 27 is a painted body sherd, with red paint on a red slipped background. Both sherds are poorly fired, of coarse ware, and hand-made, without the use of a wheel. This pottery is paralleled in its general characteristics by material from *Umm el-Jimāl* (66-85).

IV. Khirbet el-Fityān

The *castellum* of Khirbet el-Fityān is situated about two kilometers northwest of Lejjūn above the steep northern wall of the Wadi Lejjūn. This fortified strong point controlled access into the valley from the north and west and still commands an excellent view in all directions. The *castellum*, nearly square in plan (78.8×76.8 m.) is constructed of roughly quadrated limestone and chert blocks.⁵⁰ The enclosure wall measures two meters in width. Rectangular towers (4.3×3.7 m.) once projected from all four corners and two rectangular interval towers flank the main gate on the smaller

⁵⁰ See fig. 7, reproduced from *PA* vol. 2, figs. 602-603.

postern gates are situated in the east and west walls. Other interval towers were built on the south and west walls. Several towers along the south wall, which appear on the plan of Domaszewski, now have disappeared: these include the two southern angle towers. Within the fort, the only recognizable structures are located in the northwest sector; these structures are probably part of the barracks. A large rockcut cistern is located near the center of the *castellum*.

The 1976 survey team collected 207 sherds from Fityān, of which 56 could be dated.^{50a} Over half these identifiable sherds (30) dated to the Late Roman IV period (ca. 300). The presence of 11 Iron Age and five Nabatean sherds suggests that this strategic observation post was also used in these periods. The extant plan is almost certainly Roman, however, and seemingly was constructed in the same period as the camp at Lejjūn. The relative scarcity of Byzantine pottery (only four sherds of the 4th century) implies an abandonment of Fityān by the early 5th century. Perhaps this *castellum* served as a temporary base while the legionary camp was under construction. The handful of 4th century sherds may indicate that a small garrison continued to occupy this post, which guarded the legionary camp from the north, after completion of the camp. The abandonment of Fityān by ca. 400 suggests that this site was no longer needed for the defense of the legionary base.

V. Historical Conclusions

The only literary reference to the garrison of Lejjūn is found in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (Oriens 37.5, 22), which mentions that *sub dispositione viri spectabilis ducis Arabiae* is the *praefectus legionis quartae Martiae, Betthoro*. Thus, the *Notitia* provides a *terminus ante quem* of ca. A.D. 400 for the creation of this legion. The use of a pagan name, Mars, suggests a date no later than the early 4th century. Dio makes no mention of the unit in the legionary list of his history;⁵¹ therefore the IV *Martia* must have been created after ca. 230. Thus, the literary evidence supports the conclusion of the architectural and ceramic evidence: the camp was constructed and

^{50a} For the pottery from Fityān, see fig. 9, Sherds 38-55.

⁵¹ Dio 55.23-24.4.

the legion created between 230 and 324, probably in the Late Roman IV period (ca.284-324). Diocletian would seem to be the most likely candidate for creator of the legion within this period, although Aurelian is also a possibility.⁵² It is well known that Diocletian greatly increased the size of the army (especially on the frontiers) and strengthened the *limites*.⁵³ The addition of IV *Martia* thus doubled the number of legions in Arabia, complementing *legio* III *Cyrenaica* stationed at the provincial capital of Bostra to the north. The coupling of legions in pairs in the frontier provinces was common practice.⁵⁴

The size of the legionary garrison is difficult to determine. Legionary *castra* of the Principate averaged 20 to 25 hectares (50-60

⁵² Speculation about the creator has centered mostly on either Aurelian (H. M. D. Parker, "The Legions of Diocletian and Constantine", *JRS* 23 (1933) 175-189; D. Graf, "Saracens and the Defense of the Arabian Frontier", *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 229 (1978) 1-26) or Diocletian (E. Nischer, "The Army Reforms of Diocletian and Constantine", *JRS* 13 (1923) 1-55; S.T. Parker, *The Historical Development of the Limes Arabicus* (forthcoming). Brünnow and Domaszewski (*PA* vol. 2, 36) favored Diocletian, but E. Ritterling ("Legio", *RE* vol. 12, col. 1556) conjectured either as possibilities. D. Hoffmann (*Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia Dignitatum*, 2 vols. (Düsseldorf, 1969) vol. 2, 69, n. 589) recently has suggested a connection between the name of the legion and Galerius, whose protective deity was Mars. Hoffmann thus suggests a date after 293. Several scholars have pointed out that the IV *Martia* was based close to the "city of Mars" (Areopolis, the modern er-Rabba, located ca. 13 kilometers west of Lejjün and situated directly on the *via nova*); they suggest that the name of the town may have figured in the selection of the unit's name. There seems little doubt that the number "four" was chosen as a continuation of the sequence begun by the other legion of the province: III *Cyrenaica*. For a general treatment of the Roman army of the province, cf. M.P. Speidel, "The Roman Army in Arabia", *ANRW* 11.8, 687-730.

⁵³ Zosimus, 2.34; Lactantius, *On the Deaths of the Persecutors*, 7. For a thorough discussion of the ancient evidence, cf. A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1964) vol. 1, 52-60, who concludes that "the army was approximately doubled between the Severan period and the reign of Diocletian, and the greater part of the increase was due to Diocletian himself". Also see D. van Berchem, *L'armée de Diocletien et la réforme constantinienne* (Paris, 1952) 25-26.

⁵⁴ H.M.D. Parker, *The Roman Legions* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 1958) 177-181.

acres).⁵⁵ These legionary camps held a normal legionary complement of ca. 5,000 men. But it has long been known that the legions of the Late Empire were somewhat smaller. The Lejjūn camp, for example, is only 20% of the size of camps from the Principate, covering ca. 4.6 ha. (ca. 11 acres). Thus, the estimate by Domaszewski of a garrison of 4,000 or more seems too high.⁵⁶

As discussed above, the six main barrack blocks in the eastern half of the camp each consists of three or four rows of 18 rooms. The three larger rooms in each row closest to the *via principalis* are somewhat larger than the rest and were probably centurions' quarters. The remaining 60 rooms in four of the blocks would have furnished accommodation for 30 *contubernia*; each *contubernium* of eight soldiers normally was assigned two rooms. One room was for sleeping, the other for storage. Under this formula each block would have contained three centuries (240 men) and each pair of blocks would have held one cohort (480 men). Altogether, the six blocks would represent three cohorts, or 1,440 men.⁵⁷ The blocks of larger rooms south of the *principia* may have sheltered other troops. It appears that the camp was designed to accommodate ca. 1,500 men. It seems probable that detachments of the legion garrisoned the adjacent *castella*, such as Khirbet el-Fityān, and the numerous watchtowers of this area. In any case, it seems clear that *legio* IV *Martia*, like most legions of the *limitanei*, was smaller than the standard legions of the Principate.

The results of the 1976 survey of other sites in this sector of the frontier suggest that Lejjūn was not the only military installation constructed in the period of Diocletian. The *castellum* of Khirbet el-Fityān already has been discussed above. Qaṣr Bshīr, a *castellum* located ca. 25 kilometers northeast of Lejjūn, was constructed in

⁵⁵ G. Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army of the First and Second Centuries A.D.* (New York, 1969) 182.

⁵⁶ *PA* vol. 2, 36.

⁵⁷ The middle pair of blocks (flanking the *via praetoria*) consist of only three rows of 18 rooms instead of four; as suggested above, the fourth row once may have been formed by a portico along the *via praetoria*. It must be stressed, however, that there is no extant evidence to support this suggestion.

306.⁵⁸ The large sample of pottery gathered at Bshīr dates entirely within the Late Roman IV to Early Byzantine II periods (ca. 284-392), confirming the date of foundation. From Bshīr a line of three more *castella* runs northward: Qaṣr eth-Thuraiya, Khirbet ez-Zōna, and al-Qaṣṭal (see map, fig. 1). On the basis of the ceramic evidence it appears that at least the first two forts also were founded in the Late Roman IV period. Further west, on the *via nova*, the upper and lower *castella* of Muhāṭṭet el-Hāj in the Wadi Mūjib were also occupied in this period, although they were originally established by the Nabateans.⁵⁹

The existence of many Iron Age and Nabatean watchtowers in this region provided the Romans with a ready-made observation system. The survey sampled nine watchtowers in this area; all but two yielded Late Roman pottery. One tower, Qaṣr Abū Rukba, ca. 15 kilometers south of Lejjūn, seems to have been built in the Late Roman IV period because this was the date of the earliest pottery from the site.⁶⁰ Further, the architectural plan is quite different from that of the Iron Age watchtowers.⁶¹ As one might expect from all this construction, there was considerable work on the Roman road system, both in this sector and in the province generally. Milestones in the sector of the *limes* east of the Dead Sea are attested from the years 288, 292-304, 305-306, and 307, primarily along the *via nova*.⁶² The military units which guarded the central sector included, in addition to IV *Martia*, two elite cavalry vexillations: the *equites Dalmatae Illyriciani* (at Ziza, modern Jiza) and the *equites Mauri Illyriciani* (at Areopolis, modern Rabba).⁶³ The *auxilia* of the sector

⁵⁸ CIL 3.14149.

⁵⁹ For a summary of the dated pottery from each of these sites, cf. S.T. Parker, "Preliminary Report", 23-24.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* For the pottery from Rukba, see fig. 9, Sherds 56-62.

⁶¹ For a plan of this watchtower, cf. *PA* vol. 2, 43.

⁶² P. Thomsen, "Die römischen Meilensteine der Provinzen Syria, Arabia, und Palaestina", *ZDPV* 40 (1917) 92-93.

⁶³ *N.D. Or.* 37.16, 17.

included three cohorts: *cohors octava voluntaria* (at Valtha, modern Wadi Wāla), *cohors tertia felix Arabum* (in ripa Vade Afaris fluvii in castris Arnonensibus, modern Wadi Mūjib), and *cohors tertia Alpinorum* (described simply as *apud Arnona*).⁶⁴

Although the central sector of the *Limes Arabicus* was the primary focus of this buildup, other portions of the frontier also received attention during the period of the Tetrarchy. In the north, the *castellum* of Deir el-Kahf in the Hauran was built in 306.⁶⁵ To the south of Kahf a fort was built at the important oasis of Azraq in this period.⁶⁶ The southern sector of the frontier was reorganized into the *Limes Palaestinae*, part of the new province of *Palaestina Salutaris*. The great legionary camp at Udhruh, near Petra, probably was built in this period, as its architecture and pottery suggest.⁶⁷ One scholar has recently suggested that Udhruh may have been garrisoned originally by *legio VI Ferrata*, which had been posted in northern Palestine since the early 2nd century and may now have moved up to the newly strengthened frontier in Trans-Jordan. The legion may have been destroyed or disbanded during the 4th century, which would explain the absence of both the unit and the post in the *Notitia*.⁶⁸ Farther south, the transfer of *legio X Fretensis* from Jerusalem to Aila on the Gulf of Aqaba also must have occurred in this period. This legion was still in Jerusalem as late as 251-254 but had shifted to Aila by the early 4th century.⁶⁹

All told, it appears that two great *castra*, seven *castella* and several

⁶⁴ N.D. Or. 37.33-35. Speidel ("The Roman Army in Arabia", 708-711) suggests that *cohors III Alpinorum* and *cohors VIII voluntariorum* were brought to Arabia from the Danubian frontier by Aurelian.

⁶⁵ PAES, III. A. 2, no. 228 (pp. 126-127).

⁶⁶ IGR 3.1339.

⁶⁷ S.T. Parker, "Preliminary Report", 24.

⁶⁸ Speidel, "Notes on the Roman Army in Palestine", ZPE forthcoming.

⁶⁹ D. Barag, "Brick Stamp Impressions of the Legion X Fretensis", *Bonner Jahrbücher* 167 (1967) 244-267, notes coins of Aelia Capitolina (249-251) and Neapolis (251-254) with the legionary insignia (p. 244, n. 1); Eusebius, *Onomasticon*, 210. 78, attests that the legion was at Aila by ca. 325.

watchtowers were constructed in this period, and that the bulk of this work centered on the area east of the Dead Sea. The reasons for this buildup are not entirely clear. Certainly the disaster of the Palmyrene invasion and occupation of the province necessitated some rebuilding; Aurelian probably strengthened the provincial garrison with cavalry units drawn from the West.⁷⁰ Diocletian, however, seems to have gone farther by increasing troop strength, repairing the road system, and building new fortifications. He also of course reorganized the command structure: the former *legatus Augusti* was replaced by two *duces* of Arabia and Palestine. There may have been increasing Arab pressure on the central sector of the frontier, although the evidence for this is scanty. It is known that Diocletian conducted a major campaign against the Arabs ("Saracens") in 290, but few details of this operation have survived.⁷¹

Throughout the 4th century the central sector seems to have remained well fortified, as the evidence of the *Notitia*, Ammianus Marcellinus, and ceramic evidence from the forts of the sector suggests.⁷² But during the 5th century there are strong indications of widespread abandonment of the fortifications in this sector. Among these were the *castella* of al-Qaṣṭal, Qaṣr eth-Thuraiya, Qaṣr Bshīr, and Khirbet el-Fityān. Several watchtowers in this area, such as the two Qaṣr ez-Za'farān watchtowers, er-Rāma, Qaṣr el-'Al, and Qaṣr Abū Rukba were also abandoned during the 5th century. The legionary camp of Lejjūn itself probably was abandoned soon after 500; only three sherds of Late Byzantine date were found in the sample of over 1,500 sherds. These three sherds were identified as Late Byzantine I (ca. 491-527) in date. The only military sites of the central sector that continued to be occupied after ca. 500 were the two *castella* of Muhāṭṭet el-Hāj on the *via nova* and the *castellum* of Khirbet ez-Zōna, near the source of the Wadi Wāla. Significantly,

⁷⁰ Speidel, "The Roman Army in Arabia", 724-725.

⁷¹ *Latin Panegyrics* 11.5.4; W. Ensslin, *Zur Ostpolitik des Kaisers Diokletians* (Munich, 1942) 27.

⁷² Ammianus, 14.8.13; *N.D. Or.* 37; S.T. Parker, "Preliminary Report", 27-28.

none of the surveyed watchtowers produced any Late Byzantine (i.e., post cā. 500) pottery; thus all probably were abandoned during the 5th century.⁷³ The wholesale abandonment of the watchtowers, which functioned as the “eyes and ears” of the *limes*, must have severely weakened the system.

Once again, the reasons for this withdrawal are obscure. But it is clear that Arab pressures on the frontier had not ended with Diocletian’s campaign. The reign of Valens (364-378) witnessed a major Saracen invasion under Queen Mavia.⁷⁴ Jerome mentions another Saracen incursion in 411.⁷⁵ Although some military construction continued in Arabia after the 4th century, none of it occurred in the central sector, but in the northern region.⁷⁶ Procopius, in a famous passage, blames Justinian for the sharp reduction of the *limitanei* on the eastern frontier.⁷⁷ But it now appears on the basis of the survey evidence that this process was underway, in Arabia at least, during the 5th century. The disasters of the eastern emperors along the Danube, beginning with the crushing defeat at Adrianople in 378, as well as continuing pressure from the Sassanids in Mesopotamia, may have encouraged the emperors to strip troops from the *Limes Arabicus* for service in more threatened areas. Justinian merely completed this process with the formal turnover of primary defensive responsibility to the Ghassānid phylarchs early in

⁷³ S.T. Parker, “Preliminary Report”, 23-24, 28, and fig. 3.

⁷⁴ Rufinus, *HE* 2.6; Socrates, *HE* 4.36.

⁷⁵ Jerome, *Epistle* 126.

⁷⁶ The *castella* of Qasr el Bā’iq (*PAES* III. A. 2, no. 21, p. 42) and Umm el-Jimāl (*PAES* III. A. 3, no. 237, pp. 136-137) both were built between 411-413 and probably are related to the invasion mentioned by Jerome. This has been suggested by G. W. Bowersock, “Limes Arabicus”, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 80 (1976) 219-229. In 1977 Parker supervised soundings within the *castellum* at Jimal which confirm the date of the inscription. The latest evidence of military construction in Arabia is the rebuilding of Qasr el-Ḥallābāt in 529 (*PAES* III. A. 2, no. 18, pp. 22-23, republished by Speidel, “The Roman Army in Arabia”, 706.

⁷⁷ Procopius, *Secret History*, 24. 12ff.

the 6th century.⁷⁸

Eventual excavation of Lejjūn, Udhruh, and other contemporary sites of the central *limes*, now planned to commence in 1980, should increase greatly our knowledge of the *Limes Arabicus*, the eastern frontier, and the Late Roman army.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Wolfgang Liebeschütz, "The Defences of Syria in the Sixth Century", *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms II* (Cologne, 1977) 487-499, rightly points out the abandonment of the Syrian *limes* south of the Euphrates during the 6th century. This frontier, marked by the *Strata Diocletiana*, seems to have undergone a development comparable to the central Arabian *limes*.

⁷⁹ For a recent summary of the history of the Arabian frontier, cf. S. T. Parker, "Towards a History of the Limes Arabicus", in W. S. Hanson and L. J. F. Keppie, eds., *Roman Frontier Studies 1979* (Oxford, 1980) 865-878.



Aerial view of the legionary camp of el-Lejjūn, 1977, facing northeast (photo by James A. Sauer: all rights reserved).

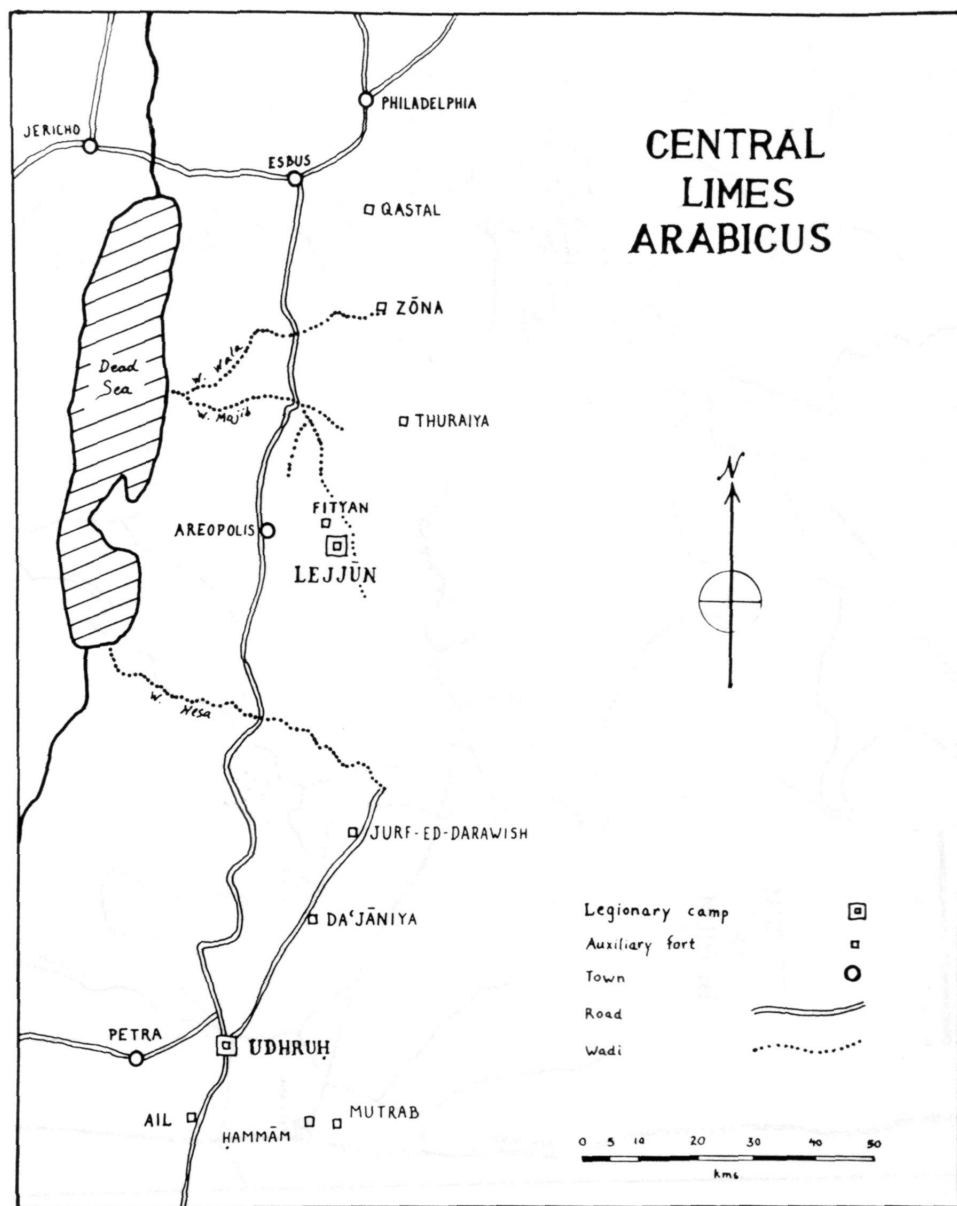


Fig. 1

A hand-drawn map of the region of Lejjūn, showing topographical features, roads, and settlements. The map includes a scale bar (0 to 3 km), a north arrow, and labels for various locations and rivers. Key features include the Via Nova, W. Baraka, W. Moji B, W. Al Il Sham, Fityah, Lejjūn, and a watchtower. The map is titled "THE REGION OF LEJJŪN".

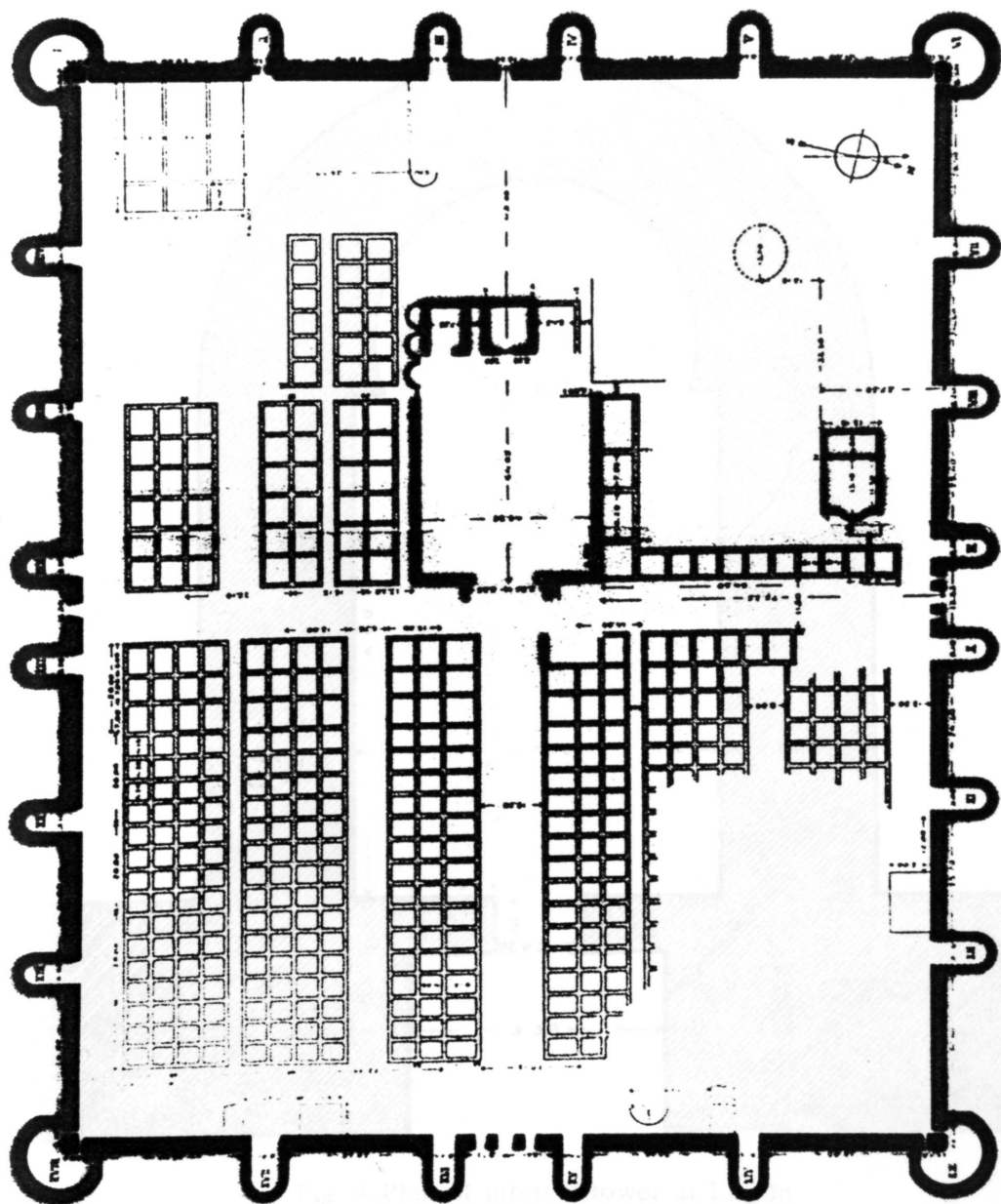


Fig. 3 Plan of el-Lejjūn

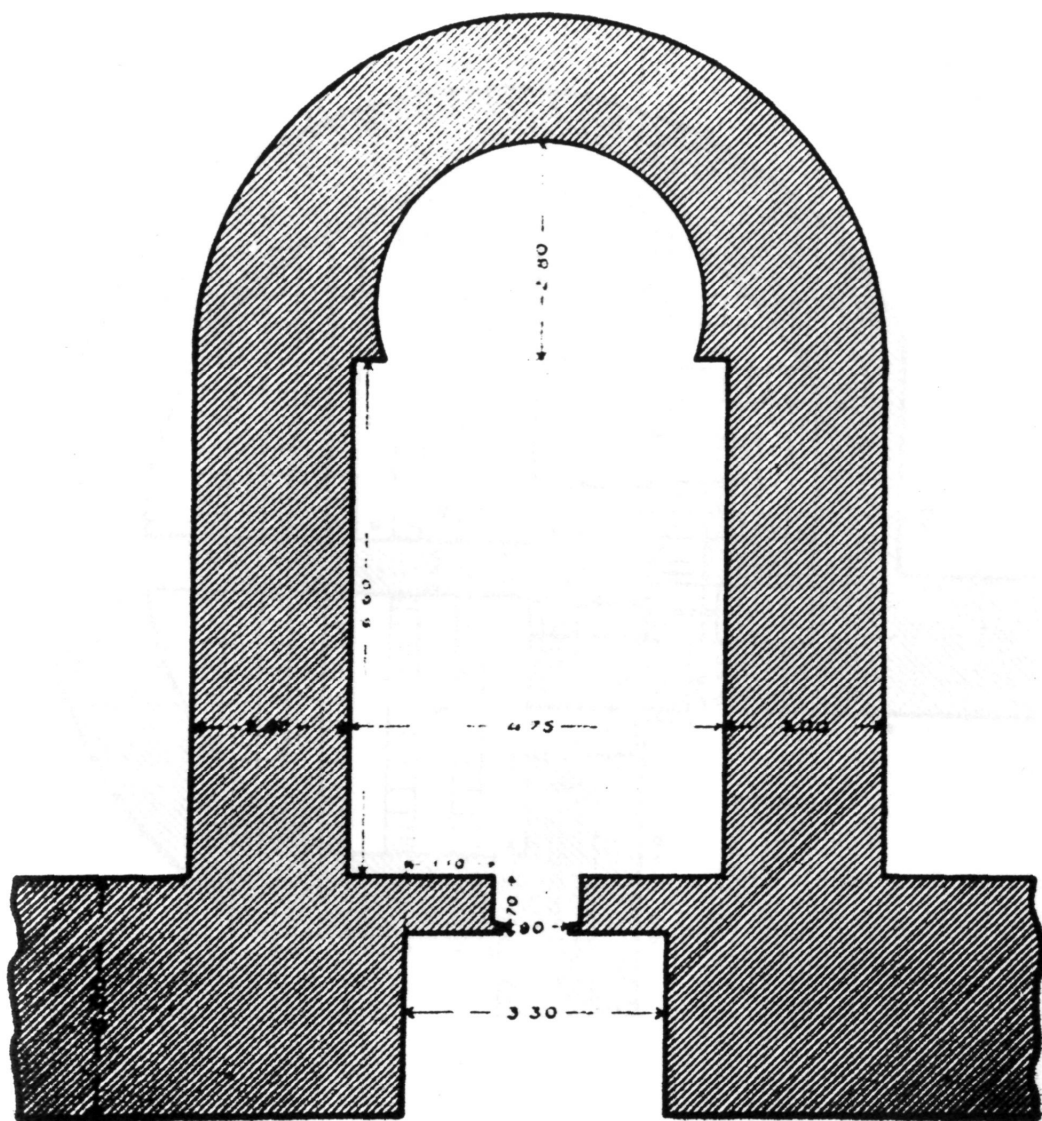


Fig. 4 Plan of interval tower at Lejjūn

Fig. 5 Plan of angle tower at Lejjūn

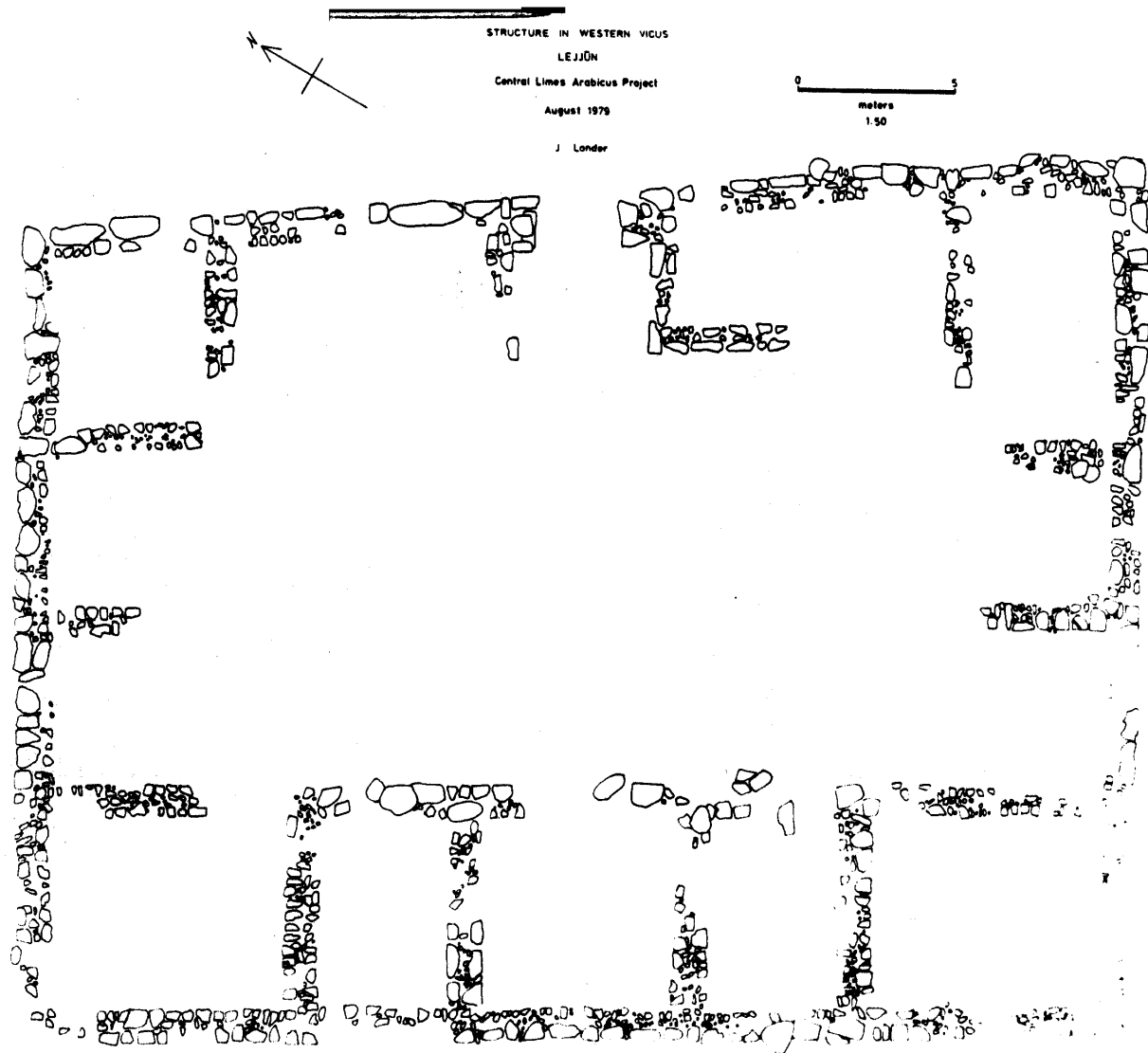


Fig. 6 Plan of building in vicus of Lejjūn

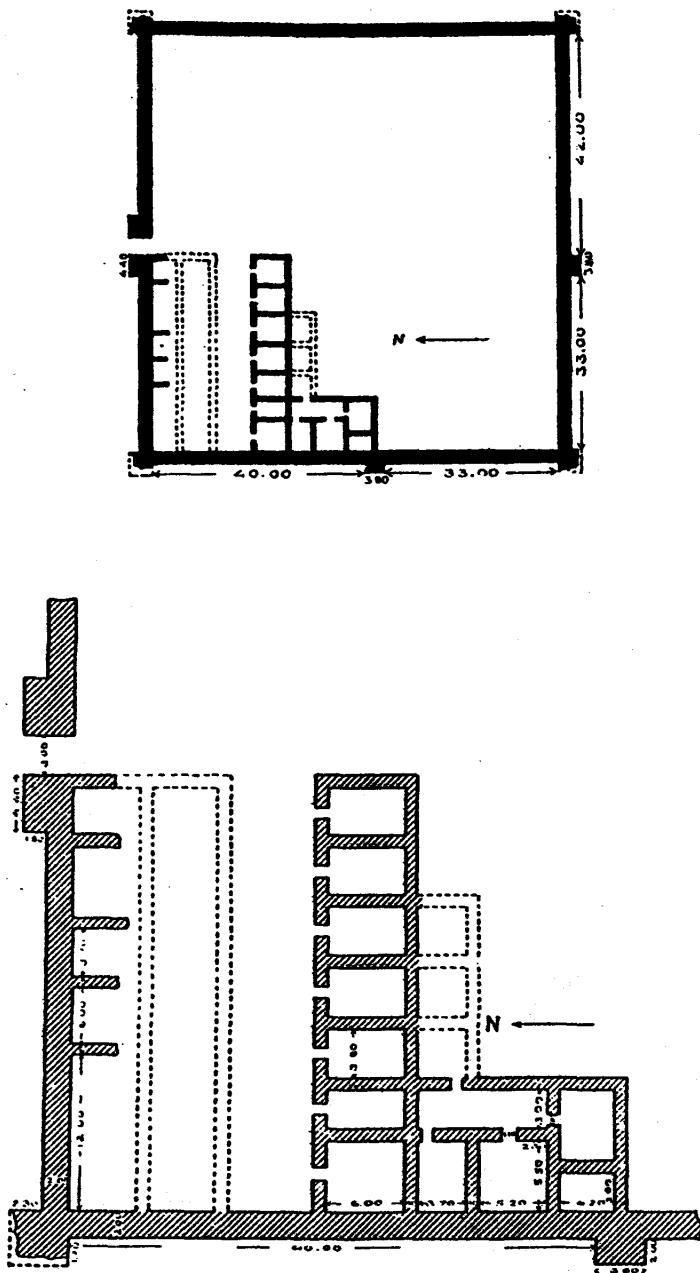


Fig. 7 Plan of Khirbet el-Fityān

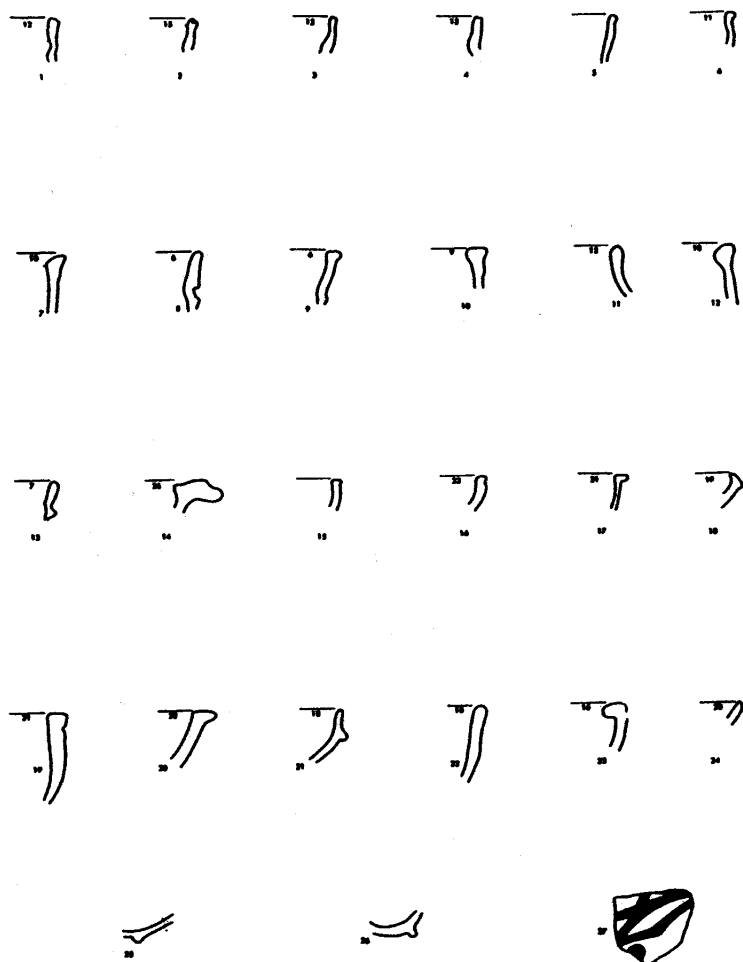


Fig. 8 Pottery sherds from Lejjūn



fig. 9 Pottery sherds from Lejjūn (28-37), Fityān (38-55), and Abu Rukba (56-62)

USURPERS' COINS: THE CASE OF MAGNENTIUS*

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The study of ancient numismatic evidence seems to swing between two poles. Roman and Byzantine coins, from one perspective, are a medium of official art, and the representations found on these coins are often analyzed for their iconographic statements, thought to reflect specific, contemporary, official policy. The coins are simultaneously, and perhaps more importantly, money. As such they offer evidence of the functioning of major institutions within the government, for the production of coin was one of the charges of ministers of finance with changing titles and varying responsibilities over the course of centuries. During the empire, these officials were involved, in part, in the establishment of monetary policies and with the procedures whereby such policies were implemented. At the practical level, officials had to insure a supply of metals to the mints, fix the quantity of metal to be coined, and decide in what denominations. At some level in the bureaucracy, officials were also charged with the oversight of the functioning of individual mints and the introduction of coin into circulation.

Most Roman imperial coins carry on their surfaces inscriptional references to the then-reigning emperor, the ultimate authority for the coinage, although in the early empire some measure of minting authority lay with the Roman Senate. Senatorial or imperial, the coins with rare exception also carry the emperor's portrait on the front or obverse side and a scene or figure on the back or reverse.

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The portraits with their distinctive costumes and insignia, in combination with the coin legends, often serve to fix the date of a given specimen. Nevertheless, it is to the representations found on the reverses of the coins that most attention is paid: the deities, personifications, actions, and attributes found there, often associated with imperial figures, are understood as visual commentary on contemporary affairs, and these commentaries are analyzed (at times overzealously) by historians, art historians, and numismatists for the evidence they might add to the historical record.

Our literary sources give little or clouded evidence for the ill-understood question of who in the populace could or would contemplate the pictures and inscriptions on the coins. Back at the court, however, coins viewed from the perspective of the emperor and his ministers seem relatively clear in their testimony. From the early empire, with little variation, the awarding of honorific titles, entry into specific offices, adoptions into the imperial family, associations of children or colleagues in positions of power, military victories, annexations of provinces, and similar events are recorded in the coinage. The achievements are sometimes fictive but, even when fabricated, allow some sense of the emperor, the empire, as it might or should be. In order that these changing offices, events, and aspirations be recorded, new coin types were continually created. The actual execution of a new type was carried out by the engravers and manual laborers who formed the core of any individual working mint. The origin of a type as a concept — perhaps even the perception that there should be a new type — apparently lay quite near the emperor, in his inner circle of ministers. The translation of the concept into a visual image seems also to have occurred in the imperial court. As early as the Julio-Claudian period, the evidence of coins from multiple mints suggests that legends and reverse types were being sent out from a central authority in Rome with only minor modifications made on the part of mint procurators in the provinces.¹ For many decades after the Julio-Claudians, imperial

¹ C.H.V. Sutherland, "The Personality of the Mints under the Julio-Claudian Emperors," *AJP* 68 (1947) 56-63. Chief sources for the institution of the Roman mint are K. Pink's researches "Der Aufbau der römischen Münzprägung," printed

coinage issued primarily from the city of Rome, and therefore few questions arise concerning the transmission of types to distant locales. The chain for the creation of a new type, however, from the imperial court through the/a finance minister to the head of the/a mint to the engravers in individual workshops seems to have remained relatively constant.

During the later empire, when multiple mints in the provinces were again used, observations of regional styles and local fabrics are possible, but a strong sense remains of firm instructions sent out from the imperial court(s). It is a savage simplification, but the generalization applies that the later, the more centralized the financial structure of the empire. For the Late Antique period, a great deal can be known or reasonably hypothesized concerning the workings of the imperial mints and treasuries. But it is also a time when traditions of singular, specific, topical imagery appear to be changing radically. For this paper, I focus on the mid-fourth century, at which time two centralized financial systems, relatively closely coordinated with one another, divided the empire into two units, each with multiple mints. That in the West was centered in the court of the emperor Constans and that in the East, centered in the court of his brother Constantius II. In order to explore both the technical, bureaucratic processes that result in the production of coins and the actual images carried on their surfaces, I have chosen to investigate, to isolate, the problems that arise within this centralized system when a usurper declares for the throne. What follows suggests something of the nature of ancient usurpation and of the changing aspects of imperial imagery in the Late Antique.

in successive issues of the *Numismatische Zeitschrift* for the years 1933 through 1936; idem, *The Triumviri Monetales and the Structure of the Coinage of the Roman Republic* (Numismatic Studies, 7; New York, American Numismatic Society 1952). Also, H. Mattingly, *Roman Coins*, 2nd ed., rev. (London 1960) 130-31. Discussion of the later empire is provided by A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, 284-602, 3 vols. (Oxford 1964) 1: 411-37. C.H.V. Sutherland, *RIC 6: From Diocletian's Reform (AD 294) to the Death of Maximinus (AD 313)* (London 1967) 105-107; P. Bruun, *RIC 7: Constantine and Licinius* (London 1966) 13-21; also J. P. C. Kent, "Excursus: The Comes Sacrarum Largitionum," in E. C. Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies, 7; Washington, D. C., Dumbarton Oaks 1961) 35-45.

In the winter of AD 350, Flavius Magnus Magnentius, a prominent military official, the *comes rei militaris* for Gaul under the emperor Constans, was acknowledged and proclaimed Augustus by his troops and by the local population in and about the Gallic city of Augustodunum, modern day Autun. From the first, it is obvious that Magnentius moved in league with powerful supporters and fellow office holders from within the administration of the western emperor whose rule they openly challenged.² Even the ceremonial occasion of Magnentius' assumption of the purple on the 18th of January 350 was provided by a banquet given by one Marcellinus, a high ranking financial minister, the *comes rei privatae* in the court of the emperor Constans. Within weeks, this same Marcellinus was Magnentius' Master of Offices. One Fabius Titianus, consul for the year 337, prefect of the city of Rome from 339 to 341, and Constans' praetorian prefect for Gaul in the years preceding the revolt, supported Magnentius as well. Titianus took the office of urban prefect for the second time in his career in 350 and, along with others, defended the hopes of the Magnentian party in the city of Rome against subsequent usurpers.³

Magnentius himself had risen to power in the West through military service during the reign of the emperor Constantine and the joint rule of Constantine's sons. The year 350 found Magnentius at the head of the two elite palatine legions of the West with specific association with the western emperor and therefore with the imperial court or *comitatus* of Constans. Upon learning of Magnentius' revolt, Constans fled south only to encounter cavalry loyal to Magnentius headed by Gaiso, Magnentius' *magister militum*, who had Constans executed. The revolt was thus begun and

² Magnentius is briefly mentioned in all the major surveys of the later empire. For more specific reference see W. Ensslin, s.v. "Magnentius," *RE* 14¹ (1928) 445-52 with citations of our primary sources for the revolt. A fine historical sketch prefaces P. Bastien, *Le monnayage de Magnence (350-353)*, (*Numismatique Romaine*, 1; Wetteren 1964) 7ff.

³ For chief actors associated with the revolt, see *PLRE*, s.v. "Anicetus" 1, "Aurelius Celsinus" 4, "Clodius Celsinus" 6, "Magnus Decentius" 3, "Gaiso," "Magnentius," "Marcellinus" 8, 9, "Nunechius," "Celsus Probatius," "L. Aradius Valerius Proculus" 11.

the assassination committed of the western emperor, brother of the powerful eastern emperor Constantius II.

This brief sketch of the beginnings of the revolt not only supplies specific details of the early career of Magnentius but, possibly more important for our present purposes, also suggests their place in a relatively elaborate institutional framework that was Magnentius' court, apparently in position from the first days of the uprising. Most students with a basic knowledge of Roman imperial history know to associate revolts and usurpations of the throne — whether successful or unsuccessful — with rebellious generals and armies. But two legions, however elite, must be supplemented by additional troops. Operations, jurisdictions, normally associated with civil authorities must be maintained. And armies must be clothed, fed, and, perhaps most critically, paid. This is hardly news to historians, but it is at this juncture that art historians and more generally defined students of material culture often lack a logical and clearly articulated model that might explain the steps in the historical development between open rebellion and those artifacts of institutional existence that follow in its wake. For the successful usurpers, there are triumphal arches, great public buildings, and statues. And for both successful and many unsuccessful challengers, there are coins.

This is certainly the case for Magnentius who, although ultimately unsuccessful, held the field against two rival usurpers and against the eastern emperor Constantius II for three and one-half years. Magnentius' coins appear to begin almost simultaneously with his declaration in the winter of 350 and to run continuously (although not in all mints at all times) to his suicide in the summer of 353. Magnentius is not celebrated in extant public monuments; the handful of inscriptions which refer to him appear to do so incidentally; he figures briefly in contemporary and later historical writings. But his coins survive in relatively large numbers. Their legends and some details of their representations allow a fairly nuanced chronology to be built up, and students of his coinage are able to chart the growth and shrinkage of his domains as various mints begin or cease to strike in his name. As such, the numismatic evidence serves to complement the extant written record.

Fundamental questions remain, however. Chief among them: How does a usurper strike coins and what messages does such a

coinage carry? There are brief-lived usurpers who figure in the written record but who never issue coin. There appears to be a hierarchy of those who do and those who do not; perhaps, those who can and those who cannot. The coin fabrics and mint marks of Magnentian coinage are precisely those of the official imperial mints that predate the revolt. There is no hypothesis of an itinerant band of engravers, die-sinkers, die-placers, and hammerers, traveling the western empire, in search of furnaces and sites in which to set up mints for the usurper. The mint marks of Magnentian coinage match in detail those used in the years before the revolt, even to indications of individual shops within a single mint. Magnentius, therefore, or his deputies in his stead, are working within the established institutional structures of the imperial mints and, in some cases such as Trier, Lyons, and Arles, issue coin in his name within the month of his proclamation at Autun. How is this possible?

The fundamental research on the coinage of Magnentius is that of the French numismatist, Pierre Bastien.⁴ Organized by mint and by successive periods of issue within each mint, the coinage is ordered and abundantly illustrated. Bastien charts the metrology, the apparent monetary systems, the chronology of the mints, and the division of labor among workshops at single mints. Following the standards of modern numismatic scholarship, Bastien catalogues the over five hundred separate coin types known for Magnentius and thus prepares the ground for all future research. Reverse types are succinctly described in a catalogue and enumerated in chronological order in the text. Bastien briefly discusses portrait types and contributes the observation that the earliest coins of Magnentius carry inscriptions that celebrate the usurper but do so above portraits that strongly resemble the likenesses of the deposed and recently deceased emperor Constans.⁵ Bastien's chief concern is a proper catalogue for the coinage by mint and by date, and he therefore adopts a simple explanation for the questions raised by these coins. When Magnentius' portraits become more Magnentian, Bastien concludes that the usurper, or the usurper's portrait, must have made

⁴ Bastien, *Magnence*, with references to previous scholarship.

⁵ Ibid. 45-46

a tour of the mint cities.

The evidence of these early portraits, with Constans' features but Magnentius' inscriptions, is arresting and worthy of note. The coins clearly suggest that orders are being issued and obeyed without requiring Magnentius' presence at the mints, despite the desire of historians and numismatists to see the usurper making for Trier immediately after Autun in order to confiscate the imperial treasury located there. As to the nature of Magnentius' actions in Trier, if he then actually was in Trier, Magnentius is consistently described as "occupying the mint." The phrase unquestionably implies a military takeover. But there is evidence which suggests a relatively peaceful transition and therefore encourages an alternate conception of the relations that existed between the mint officials and Magnentius. If heads rolled, they were not the heads of the engravers whose work can be seen both before and after the so-called occupation of any one mint. Nor were they the heads of the chiefs of the workshops, officials signed by the workshop tags incorporated into the various mint marks.

Any changes of officials must have occurred at higher levels, and even our limited knowledge of the identities of the supporters of Magnentius allows a hypothesis of a peaceful origin for the usurper's coinage. In the persons of Marcellinus and Fabius Titianus are represented two of the three chief financial officials of the western empire at the mid-fourth century. To complete the triad, in addition to Marcellinus, the *comes rei privatae*, and Titianus, the praetorian prefect, we seek the *comes sacrarum largitionum*, the official charged with oversight of the imperial mints and treasuries. Unfortunately, no name is attested for that position in the West after the year 349 and before the year 355, precisely the years in question.⁶ That the office nevertheless existed in some form during those years and in Magnentius' court is strongly suggested by the essential uniformity of types witnessed in Magnentian coinage from the six important mints under his control (first Trier, Lyons, Arles; soon after, Aquileia, Amiens, and Rome). It is through the office of

⁶ See *PLRE* I, 1064. After AD 355, Constantius II united the halves of the empire under a single *comes sacrarum largitionum*; see "Vrsulus" 1.

the *comes sacrarum largitionum* that orders that result in such uniformity would be relayed to the procurators of the separate mints. Whether Constans' *comes* became Magnentius' *comes* or whether he held a different high office in Magnentius' administration (as did Marcellinus and Titianus) cannot be known. What is known is that major mints and imperial treasuries in Gaul and Italy were controlled by Magnentius within a few months of his proclamation. The defection of Constans' *comes largitionum*, or perhaps other highly placed officers from within that same financial system, would explain the easy opening of those mints and treasuries to the usurper through the cooperation of the local procurators who were, after all, the subordinates of the *comes*. This, in turn, would explain the clear continuity of fabric, style, and imagery that we see in the production of any one mint in the years before, during, and after the revolt.

Types once struck for the deposed emperor and for his brother Constantius II continued to be struck in the West during the revolt, then by Magnentius, both for himself and for Constantius II, from whom he hoped to gain official recognition. To be sure, a few new types were introduced as well; types that called up the ideal of *Libertas*, for example, a numismatic statement appropriate for a usurper who, like previous usurpers, styled himself a just successor to a tyrant.⁷ But even the few new types in their broader context show Magnentian coin imagery to be conciliatory, while always personally flattering, and best understood as rooted in the numismatic traditions of the immediately preceding and contemporary rulers from the house of Constantine. An investigation focussing on those types thought to record, to proclaim, the specific events of Magnentius' revolt show them in fact to do otherwise. Magnentius, although a usurper, struck coin from existing imperial mints, worked within bureaucratic and technical structures within these institutions that antecede his revolt, and issued coins which carried images that spoke of his legitimacy, of his integration into an established imperial system. To demonstrate this, some coins, specifically those thought to carry the particular imagery of his usurpation, should be examined.

⁷ See W. Kellner, *Libertas und Christogram* (Karlsruhe 1968).

The first and perhaps most important coin type under consideration is found on large gold multiples, each equivalent to three solidi, weighing approximately a half ounce (13.42 to 13.54 gm.) and measuring $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches (3.5 cm.) in diameter (figs. 1 and 2). For many years, this coin type was known only from a single specimen housed in the Cabinet des Médailles of the Bibliothèque Nationale. It was stolen in the great theft of 1831 and presumably melted down; in the years since the theft, it has been studied from a cast of the original coin. The apparent rarity of this specimen, highlighted by its somewhat romantic end, had the effect of relegating the coin, in a sense, apart from normal issues, as though it were a limited, commemorative medallion. The rarity, however, was abruptly shown to be false by the chance discovery of several additional, nearly identical pieces found in 1956 in the Yugoslavian town of Ljubljana, ancient Emona.⁸ As is the case with many accidental finds in modern times, the excavation was conducted by steam shovel. The find at Ljubljana was further complicated by numerous mishaps, snarled bureaucracy, and petty theft. The sequence of events is the stuff of black comedy but for the unpleasant truth that a cache of over twenty gold multiples — probably all of them fourth century, possibly most of them Magnentian — is now known through only thirteen surviving coins scattered in various public and private collections.

Of the thirteen, twelve are gold coins of Magnentius. The thirteenth is a triple solidus of Constans minted at Thessalonica with a familiar type struck in celebration of Constans' *decennalia* in

⁸ For the find, see A. Jeločnik, "Le trésor d' Emona," *RN6* ser., 9 (1967) 209-35. For brief descriptions of individual pieces, see W. E. Metcalf, *Age of Spirituality*, ed. K. Weitzmann (New York 1979) no. 41; J. M. Fagerlie, "Roman and Byzantine Medallions in the Collection of the American Numismatic Society", *ANSMN* 15(1969) 77-91, no. 36; P. Franke *Römische Kaiserporträts im Münzbild*, ed. P. Franke and M. Hirmer (Munich 1972) no. 51; B. Overbeck in *Die römische Münze*, ed. J. P. C. Kent, B. Overbeck, and A. Stylow (Munich 1973) no. 689; J.P.C. Kent, *Roman Coins* (New York 1978) no. 669. For the multiple formerly in the Bibliothèque Nationale, see J. M. C. Toynbee, *Roman Medallions* (Numismatic Studies, 5; New York, American Numismatic Society 1944) 187, pl. 24. 9; also F. Gnechchi, *I medaglioni romani*, 3 vols. (Milan 1912) I. Magnentius no. 1.

342/343.⁹ It is the earliest of the known coins in the hoard. A possible fourteenth gold coin, a double solidus of the Caesar Constantius Gallus, surfaced in 1958 with an appropriately Slavic provenance. If it is to be associated with the Ljubljana find, this gold piece would suggest a closing date of 354 for the treasure as it is presently constituted.¹⁰ Of the remaining twelve gold pieces, two are double solidi, ten are triples, all are Magnentian, and all are from the imperial mint at Aquileia. Further, the ten triple solidi all carry the same coin type and legend on the reverse (fig. 2), while their obverse portraits and legends differ from one another in significant respects. The consistent reverse type is a match for the now lost piece from the Cabinet des Médailles, and the ten triple solidi taken together and carefully analyzed suggest that the type, far from being rare, may have been relatively common.

The reverse type depicts the emperor on horseback moving to the right, his mount at a slow trot. He is dressed in a long-sleeved tunic with a decorative circular badge on his right shoulder. He wears soft shoes and a cloak which blows behind him, fastened on his right with a circular fibula. His head is nimbed, and his right arm is represented as extended from the elbow, his hand open in a simple gesture of witness or recognition. He does not hold the reins of his horse which are shown draped over the mane. The emperor's mount carries a saddle cloth and elaborate parade decorations across the chest and buttocks. Before this grand horse and rider, a female figure bows and gestures with her right palm open, trailing a swag of drapery.¹¹ She does not stand upright, nor does she kneel, although in one of the dies attested in the Ljubljana hoard, her legs are slightly differentiated and the figure thus appears to be in the process of

⁹ Jelocnik, "Emona," no. 1, pl. 35.1. The piece is now in the national museum in Ljubljana.

¹⁰ Ibid., 213, n. 2. The solidus of Gallus was struck at the imperial mint at Antioch; it is now held by the national museum in Belgrade. Jelocnik does not regard this coin as part of the treasure, suggesting a date in the fall of 352 for the burial of the hoard; for his argument, 226ff.

¹¹ Kent, *Roman Coins*, no. 669, wonders if she "presents the emperor with a ?scroll." In all ten, plus Paris, the object is clearly a fold of drapery.

genuflecting.¹² The posture is visually awkward but rhetorically explicit: the figure is paying homage to the equestrian emperor. She wears a sleeveless tunic, girdled beneath the breasts with an overfold at the hip. Her skirt flies behind her and her mantle billows up over her shoulders, both details indicative of rapid forward motion (as is the emperor's fluttering cloak). She wears bracelets on both arms, a turreted crown on her head, and carries a cornucopia with sheaves of grain in the crook of her left arm.

Both figures are identified and their relationship — or rather her gratitude — explained by the legend that circles the coin reverse and names Magnentius as the *LIBERATOR REIPUBLICAE*. He is the bringer of a new order or the restorer of an older and better one and receives the homage of *Respublica* in thanks. This is the classic type of the *adventus* of an emperor without the military attendants and Victory figures that are sometimes represented.¹³ He is here welcomed by the personification of *Respublica* or the Empire, the State, a personification of ever increasing importance in the imagery of the later empire. Due in part to the easy recognition of the *adventus* motif and to an erroneous, if unexpressed, expectation of an individual geographical personification in the role of the figure who welcomes the emperor, several numismatists identify the turreted female as the Tyche or personification of the city of Aquileia.¹⁴ This particular identification is in fact deduced from the mint mark below the groundline of the scene. But in the exergue we read *S[acra] M[oneta] AQ[uileiensis]*, a phrase which refers not to the image but to the mint at Aquileia and specifically to the source of the gold for this coin strike from the bullion reserves of the imperial

¹² Jeločnik, "Emona," no. 12, pl. 36.5, now in the Ljubljana national museum.

¹³ G. Koepfel, "Profectio und Adventus," *BonnJbb* 169 (1969) 130-94 with extensive citation of previous literature. More recently (and more generally), O. Nussbaum, "Geleit," *RAC* 9 (1976) 908-1048, esp. 968ff.

¹⁴ Jeločnik, "Emona," 220-21, 224-25; also Bastien, *Magnence*, p. 11 and no. 303; Metcalf, *Age of Spirituality*, no. 41; and Overbeck, *Römische Münze*, no. 689. (Kent, *Roman Coins*, no. 669, Franke, *Kaiserporträts*, no. 51, and Toynbee, *Roman Medallions*, p. 187, identify *Respublica* although no argumentation is given by the three.)

comitatus.¹⁵ The acronym below the image is far from a label for the female figure; it is, in one sense, the mark of the *comes largitionum*.

To be sure, city personifications are known in the late empire, but they are characteristically labeled (e.g. *SISCIA*, *KARTHAGO*) in the legends on the coins. Further, these legends are independent of the mint marks which may be carried in the exergues of the same strikes (e.g. *SIS*, *K*).¹⁶ The most famous *adventus* from the period, that of the equestrian Constantius Chlorus, shows him approaching a kneeling figure clearly labeled *LON[dinium]*, while the coin per se is identified by its mint mark to be the product of the imperial mint at Trier, *P[er]cussa* *TR[everorum]* (fig. 3). An identification of Aquileia for the female figure on the Magnentian gold multiples derives from an anachronistic association of fourth century coins with second century *adventus* types. (It should be pointed out, however, that even in the second century *adventus* coins, the geographical personifications are also consistently labeled.¹⁷) In clear contrast, the coin type *adventus* of the late empire seldom has a specified goal and seems, instead, to become a triumphal procession of equestrian emperor, sometimes alone or with an assortment of soldiers, Victory figures, and captives. Destinations, when sought in the scholarly literature, are infamously difficult to fix. Webb, attempting to sort out the many *adventus* scenes of the third century emperor Probus, concluded with some frustration that they occur "so frequently and in so many mints, that it is difficult to consider [the *adventus* type] as always referring to a particular visit of the

¹⁵ Sutherland, *RIC* 6, 90-92, 299. This usage appears related to the late fourth century mark *COM[itatus] OB[ryzum]*; see J. P. C. Kent, "Gold Coinage in the Later Roman Empire," *Essays in Roman Coinage Presented to Harold Mattingly* (Oxford 1956) 190-204, esp. 202-204.

¹⁶ See K. J. Shelton, "Imperial Tyches," *Gesta* 18 (1979) 32-33, with notes for further reference.

¹⁷ One thinks first of the Hadrianic series; see J. M. C. Toynbee, *The Hadrianic School* (Cambridge 1934) 24-140, with references to associated second century types.

emperor" and, we might add, to a particular place.¹⁸

The failure to recognize the personification of *Respublica* in the Magnentian multiples and the related anachronistic reference to types that might be associated with specific historical events is, in part, a reflection of the importance of second century coinage in fixing the modern definition of the nature of Roman coins and the visual language of their imagery. Whether Mattingly, in his enthusiasm, was prudent to recommend the study of Roman coins as "official bulletins" issued by the government, the ideal of specificity implicit in such a view cannot survive the test of the late coinage.¹⁹ And an eye trained on the coinage of the earlier empire easily misses the rise of new, albeit generic imagery such as *Respublica* and her sisters.

Students of Magnentian coinage have a particular interest in establishing the triple solidus type as the allegorical rendering of the *adventus* or entry of Magnentius into the city of Aquileia. The events following the proclamation of January 350 are not known with precision. Trier, Lyon, and Arles began to strike for Magnentius almost immediately; by the end of February, Gaul, Spain, Britain, and Italy were in his camp; and the triple solidus when read as a singular *adventus* would allow numismatists to place Magnentius at a specific site in late February/early March of the same year. Aquileia,

¹⁸ P. H. Webb, *RIC 5: Valerian to the Reform of Diocletian*, 2 vols. (London 1927-33), 5¹, 19. See R. Brilliant, *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art* (New Haven 1963) 173ff for discussion of transformations in late *adventus* iconography; and S. McCormack, "Change and Continuity in Late Antiquity: The Ceremony of *Adventus*," *Historia* 21 (1972) 721-52. Also K. G. Holm and G. Vikar, "The Trier Ivory, *Adventus* Ceremonial, and the Relics of Saint Stephen," *DOPapers* 33 (1979) 113-35; I thank these authors for allowing me to see their article in typescript.

¹⁹ H. Mattingly, *Roman Coins*, 140. For sharp debate on the utility of numismatic studies for historians, see A. H. M. Jones "Numismatics and History," in *Essays in Roman Coinage* (supra n. 15), 13-33; response by C. H. V. Sutherland, "The Intelligibility of Roman Imperial Coin Types," *JRS* 49 (1959) 46-55, also his address as president of the Royal Numismatic Society, 21 June 1951, in *ProcRNS* 1950-51, 6-19, in reply to a paper delivered by H. Last. Mattingly did perceive changes in the late coins but simply characterized them as savage and boastful, *Roman Coins*, 223ff.

near the border between Italy and Illyricum, was Magnentius' base of operations for some time. It was from Aquileia that he marched to meet Constantius II and back to Aquileia that he retreated after the severe check of the battle of Mursa (28 September 351).²⁰ But the imagery of the triple solidus does not depict Magnentius' entry into the city. Stressing the image as a record of a single historical event unfortunately allows the more important contribution of the coin type to pass without sufficient emphasis. The mint mark, referring as it does to the presence of Magnentius' treasury in Aquileia, can most probably be taken to indicate the presence of his traveling court in that north Italian city as well, while it simultaneously releases the coin image from too restrictive a reading.²¹

The scene of Magnentius receiving the homage of Empire was struck not once, as an *adventus* interpretation might imply, but several times in the course of his brief imperial career. The ten solidi from Ljubljana (plus Paris) carry two distinct portrait types of Magnentius and two different legends. In combination, these four variables — two portraits, two legends — produce three separate obverse types that can be securely assigned to the first three years of his rule, possibly indicating a role for this coin type as an annual issue from the imperial treasury. The portrait type for the year 350 (fig. 1) shows a profile bust of Magnentius wearing a cuirass and a paludamentum fastened with a jeweled fibula; he is hailed *IMP[erator] CAES[ar] MAGNENTIVS AVG[ustus]*. The type for the year 351 clearly indicates the office of *consul ordinarius* that Magnentius held that year, representing him in elaborately ornamented consular robes; his legend then names him *D[ominus] N[oster] MAG[nus] MAGNENTIVS P[ius] F[elix] AVG[ustus]*. This more elaborate legend is continued for the portrait type for the year 352 which returns to the conventional military bust first seen in

²⁰ Bastien, *Magnence*, 11ff.

²¹ The triple solidus is actually preceded by a single solidus type struck at Aquileia bearing the mint mark *SMAQ* and the multiple is therefore not the earliest evidence for Magnentius' presence (or, rather, the presence of his court) in the city. Other mints (Trier, Lyons, Arles, and Rome) strike gold for Magnentius, but none sign with the mark *SM*.

the type for 350.²²

Careful analysis of visual details in these representations indicates that at least five different dies were used in the execution of the obverse portraits of Magnentius on the extant triple solidi. Differences between any two dies for the reverse equestrian scene are far less subtle. (Compare figs. 2 and 4.) Figures are larger or smaller relative to the circular surface of the coin which remains invariable; the emperor sometimes rides a stallion (fig. 2), sometimes a mare (fig. 4); horses' tails arch or droop; manes are braided or loose; and the cloaks, skirts, and mantles of the human figures billow more or less vigorously. From the seven triple solidi available for comparison, seven separate reverse dies can be deduced. Roman coin dies are not inherently fragile objects, with single die pairs capable of striking thousands of coins.²³ (Although when speaking of gold coinage, perhaps the treasury rather than the dies set the limits.) The gold multiples in question, therefore, represent a major issue of Magnentius which continued over a three year period. The triple solidus is, in fact, the heaviest gold coin issued by Magnentius' mints²⁴ and as such should be understood as a coin distributed, probably through pay, to the highest ranks of his civilian and military office holders.

This image of the emperor and his grateful empire has no parallel in the single solidus pieces of Magnentius, nor in his silver or bronze. This apparent hierarchy of image and metal is a familiar aspect of late coinage. Another type, however, seen in bronze medallions of Magnentius, pieces for honorific presentation not commercial circulation, does allow the observation of another, related iconographic statement. The bronze medallions were struck in Rome in the early months of 350 with obverse portraits showing

²² Jeločnik, "Emona," the year 350: nos. 2-8, pls. 35.2-4, 36.1. The year 351: no. 10, pl. 36.3 The year 352: nos. 12, 13, pl. 36.5. The Cabinet des Médailles multiple was a type for the year 350.

²³ See D. Sellwood, "Minting," *Roman Crafts*, ed. D. Strong and D. Brown (London 1976) 62-73.

²⁴ Only one other triple solidus type of Magnentius is known, struck to mark the elevation of his brother Decentius as Caesar: Bastien, *Magnence*, no. 36.

either Magnentius or Constantius II. This medallion type, along with contemporary coin strikes, thus documents an early stage in the revolt when Magnentius hoped to win official recognition of his position as western ruler from the eastern emperor. Although surviving pieces are badly worn, their reverse type shows an enthroned emperor (read either Magnentius or Constantius) seated, wearing civilian dress, holding a scroll in his left hand, and attended by two female figures (fig. 5). The figure to the right in helmet, Amazonian tunic with right breast bared, wearing boots and carrying a staff, extends her right arm behind the emperor in a gesture that speaks of support and encouragement. To his right, a female figure in a long tunic and a turreted crown approaches, bowing from the hip, left foot forward, half walking, half kneeling. She wears a mantle that billows away from her back and holds a loop of it forward to catch coins given her by the seated emperor.

On the medallions, a barely legible inscription identifies the scene as a *LARGITIO* or largesse. The figure at the right might be Roma or *Virtus* — although personified *Virtus* is rare by the mid-fourth century. The figure at the left (but the emperor's right and that is an important distinction) must be *Respublica*. Some scholars, accustomed to pairs of Roma and Constantinopolis in this time period, identify the bowing, genuflecting figure as the personification of the eastern capital.²⁵ Pairs of Roma and Constantinopolis enthroned as equals are in fact important types in the coinage of Constantius II.²⁶ But the equality stressed by Constantius is all the more reason to understand that the explicit statement of inequality found on the Magnentian medallion, issued in the names of both eastern and western rulers with no small interest in conciliating the two parties, represents somethings distinct: a role that was shared by them both. The bronze medallions celebrate the Augusti as the

²⁵ Ibid., no. 448. Gneecchi, *Medaglioni* II: Constantius II no. 10; Magnentius nos. 2, 3; Overbeck, *Römische Münze*, no. 673. All three authors read Constantinopolis. Kent, *Roman Coins* no. 670, considers both Constantinopolis and *Respublica*, although he decides for Constantinopolis.

²⁶ See J. M. C. Toynbee, "Roma and Constantinopolis in Late Antique Art from 312 to 365," *JRS* 37 (1947) 135-44.

generous benefactors of the personified empire. To read the Magnentian scene of largesse as a patronizing statement in which the superior western ruler and western capital aid the humbled eastern capital is to forget the joint nature of the coin strike, to see pointed, rather risky political statements in the usurper's coinage, and therefore to interpret coin propaganda running absolutely counter to the diplomatic missions we know Magnentius to have sponsored in the early months of his revolt, the date of these bronze medallions.

This parallel coinage of Magnentius and Constantius is better appreciated and integrated into a broader context when a solidus type of Constantius II is considered (fig. 6). Dating from roughly the same period, Constantius' coin was issued from the imperial mint at Antioch. Struck in at least two workshops of that mint, the type is clearly a variation of the type seen in the Magnentian gold multiples from Aquileia.²⁷ (Compare figs. 2, 4, and 6.) Constantius wears a diadem, where Magnentius is nimbed; Magnentius gestures, while Constantius holds his reins; *Respublica* greets Magnentius with a cornucopia and Constantius with a torch. Saluted *GLORIA REI PVBLICAE*, Constantius is represented, as is Magnentius, as the worthy recipient of the gratitude of the empire. Questions of relative chronology — Which is first, Magnentius' type or Constantius' type? — cannot be answered, for while Magnentius' issue dates of 350, 351, and 352 are known, precise dates for Constantius' strikes are not. And questions of relative chronology are potentially misleading: they imply a competitive war of coin types, perhaps appropriate for Renaissance medals but of questionable relevance for Roman imperial coins.

It seems far more important to understand both types as testifying to the same broad definition of who and what the Roman emperor was or should be in the mid-fourth century: a military figure with

²⁷ Kent, *Roman Coins*, no. 684. The British Museum specimen is an issue of *officina I* of the Antioch mint (*SMANI*). An example published by Jeločnik was struck in *officina B*: "Emona," pl. 37.6. Overbeck, *Römische Münze*, no. 689, understands the type to refer to a specific *adventus* of Constantius II into Antioch. In addition to the arguments given above with regard to the *Respublica* of the Magnentian multiple, the established type of the Tyche of Antioch would argue against this identification.

charge and beneficent care for the cities and peoples of the empire. Within that definition is a concept of the empire as a unit potentially expressible within the language of the Greco-Roman visual arts by a single personification which these coin types render as *Respublica*. She is clearly related to Tyche figures or city personifications as her turreted crown makes apparent. In the refined language of coin types, in which complex scenes and allegories are most commonly reduced to unequivocal two-figure compositions, *Respublica* for both Magnentius and Constantius may, in fact, stand for differentiated groups of city personifications such as those which crowd the lowest register of the south face of the base of the triumphal column of Arcadius of the early fifth century AD (fig. 7). This scene, recorded in the sixteenth century sepia drawings of the Freshfield codex, is peopled with city personifications who stand, process, and rush symmetrically towards the center, carrying torches, paterae, and crowns.²⁸ The figures, clothed in garments and turreted crowns like those of *Respublica* (or is the relationship the reverse?), there pay homage to the emperors Arcadius and Honorius. An immediate association between monumental sculptural programs and coin types should not be inferred. Rather, the visual linkages between the multiple city personifications and the singular *Respublica*, plus the fixed relationship of homage to the imperial figure common to them both, serve to locate *Respublica* in a relatively elaborate Late Antique symbol system of governors and governed.

One of the difficulties that results in the misreadings of *Respublica* in the coinage of both Magnentius and Constantius is her relatively recent emergence within imperial imagery in the Late Antique period. To be sure, the concept, both juridical and rhetorical, was well established long before, but the appearance of the personified image is late. For the modern observer, her arrival is perhaps further complicated by numerous other, contemporary shifts in official iconography, many of which mark the demise of familiar, relatively

²⁸ S. R. Zwirn in *Age of Spirituality* (supra n. 8), no. 68. For more complete illustration, see E. H. Freshfield, "Notes on a Vellum Album," *Archeologia* 72 (1922) 87-104, pls. 15-23.

specific symbols rather than the rise of new and more generalized images that will characterize many Late Antique and early Byzantine programs. Similar simple attributes of costume and turreted crown and comparable deferential attitudes towards the imperial person suggest an association between *Respublica* and an earlier imperial personification of *Orbis Terrarum*.²⁹ The probable connection of the two offers a perspective whereby the rise of *Respublica* can be more clearly grasped and the genesis of a late imperial type better appreciated. The visual links are relatively obvious, although the chronology and development of the *Orbis Terrarum* types must be followed with some care. Both *Respublica* and *Orbis Terrarum* have their origins in the imagery of city goddesses, but their interrelations may be more complex. First seen in the coins of the first century emperor Vespasian, *Orbis Terrarum* reappears in Hadrianic coinage where the emperor is shown in the act of pulling the kneeling personification to her feet. The coin is dedicated by the Senate to Hadrian as the *RESTITVTORI ORBIS TERRARVM*.³⁰ In the context of first and second century coinage, such a broad reference is unusual, although the type of the emperor as the restorer of specific provinces and single cities is a commonplace of the time.³¹ Legends that style the emperor as the *RECTOR ORBIS* are employed by the Severan emperors,³² but while the *restitutor* type continues, *Orbis Terrarum* ceases after

²⁹ J. M. C. Toynbee, "Britannia on Roman Coins of the Second Century A.D.," *JRS* 14 (1924) 154.

³⁰ H. Mattingly and E. A. Sydenham, *RIC2: Vespasian to Hadrian* (London 1926). Vespasian nos. 116(?), 317, 318, 324, 327, 334, 338, 343, 350, 356 (?). Hadrian nos. 594, 603.

³¹ For Hadrian as *restitutor* see Toynbee, *Hadrianic School*, 24-140 *passim*; an earlier Augustan type is discussed by C. C. Vermeule, "Un aureo augusteo del magistrato monetale Cossus Lentulus," *Numismatica* n.s. 1 (1960) 5-11. See also A. Alföldi, "Die Ausgestaltung des monarchischen Zeremoniells am römischen Kaiserhofe," repr. in *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche* (Darmstadt 1970) 52-53; Brilliant, *Gesture and Rank*, *passim* (indexed under "restitution-restoration").

³² Most easily referenced through the index of legends, H. Mattingly and E. A. Sydenham, *RIC 4¹: Pertinax to Geta* (London 1936).

Hadrian to appear as the recipient of this imperial effort. Nearly one hundred and forty years after the Hadrianic types, *Orbis Terrarum*, now simplified to *Orbis*, returns to the coinage as before, shown being restored by the emperor (fig. 8). The issues in gold, base silver (billon) and brass were common during the mid-third century joint rule of Valerian and Gallienus.³³

The mechanics of such a revival are unclear, although the persistence of a general *restitutor* type during the intervening years does simplify the inquiry. The hiatus between even the Severan *Orbis* legends and images of Valerian, however, is over forty years. Interestingly, the revived Valerian legends celebrating the *RESTITVTOR ORBIS* have a certain independence from the *restitutor* image as such and are found linked with reverse types of the emperor standing, seated, or sacrificing at an altar.³⁴ The gradual disassociation of coin types and legends is a characteristic of the late coinage, and emperors following Valerian are styled *RESTITVTOR ORBIS* (and *PACATOR ORBIS*) while depicted simply standing alone, receiving palms from Victory figures, accepting globes from the gods Mars, Jupiter, and Sol Helios, or standing amidst barbarian captives. And an early fourth century coin salutes Constantine as *RECTOR TOTIVS ORBIS* with a type of the emperor seated, holding a ring inscribed with zodiacal symbols.³⁵ It is a variant on a then familiar legend and simultaneously a verbal-visual pun on *orbis*.

One of the types new to the late empire, associated with the *RESTITVTOR ORBIS* legend, stands out for its consistency and the sheer frequency with which it is struck throughout the late third century. It is a simple scene in which the emperor, dressed in military costume, stands to the right while a conventionally garbed female figure approaches from the left, proffering a wreath.³⁶ The familiar

³³ Webb, *RIC* 5¹, Valerian nos. 50, 116-18, 149, 171; Gallienus (joint rule) nos. 91, 164, 165, 234-36.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Valerian nos. 119, 172; Salonina no. 83.

³⁵ Again, most easily referenced through the indices of legends: Webb, *RIC* 5¹ and 5²; Sutherland, *RIC* 6; and Bruun, *RIC* 7. The coin of Constantine with zodiacal ring, *RIC* 7, Ticinum no. 54.

³⁶ Webb, *RIC* 5¹, Aurelian nos. 53, 139, 287-306, 347, 348, 386, 389, 403. *Idem.* *RIC* 5², Probus nos. 731-36, 925; Carus nos. 106, 107.

legend suggests an identification of the female figure as *Orbis*, but in a time of wandering legends perhaps caution is appropriate when faced with a new coin type. The image is also noteworthy for it is the last time that *Orbis* (if it is *Orbis*) appears in the coinage. And it is in clearly related scenes of figures offering wreaths that we encounter *Respublica* in the early fourth century.

There is one step of some importance, however, prior to the Constantinian material. Bronze medallions struck during the one year reign of the emperor Tacitus (275-76) allow a hypothesis of further connections between *Orbis* and *Respublica* (fig. 9).³⁷ The medallions bear the legend *RESTITVT[or] REIPVBLICAE* and represent the emperor pulling a kneeling female figure to her feet. It is the first appearance of the phrase *Respublica* in a coin legend and it is here firmly associated with a turreted figure whose mantle even has the good grace to billow. Struck fifteen years after the last *restitutor* type with *Orbis* (fig. 8), the medallion seems to signal a transition. Taken together, the two demonstrate that both figures — *Orbis* and *Respublica* — were conceived with identical attributes and understood as equivalent beneficiaries of imperial actions. The heroic achievements of the emperors are measured quite clearly by the enormity of the institutions and concepts restored.

The phrase *Respublica* begins to figure in the coin legends with increasing frequency from the late third century on. It is possible that the personified *Respublica* appears unnamed on a gold coin of Maxentius where a turreted figure crouches in obeisance between the figures of Mars and the emperor.³⁸ Far more important is her securely attested appearance in coins of Constantine and his sons. *Respublica* is represented in that coinage in numerous contexts. She

³⁷ Gneecchi, *Medaglioni* II, Tacitus no. 7; Toynbee, *Roman Medallions*, 163.

³⁸ Sutherland, *RIC* 6, Ostia no. 6. The legend, *VICTOR OMNIVM GENTIVM A[ustus] N[oster]* reflects a sentiment appropriately vast. M. R. Alföldi, *Die Constantinische Goldprägung* (Mainz 1963) no. 661. The classic reference on proskynesis is A. Alföldi, "Zeremoniells," esp. 8 ff, 46 ff, 59ff. See H. Stern "Remarks on the 'Adoratio' under Diocletian," *JWarb* 17 (1954) 184-89, for a differing view of the chronology of developments in court ceremony.

receives a statuette of Victory from the personified *Securitas*.³⁹ In company with *Pax* she offers the emperor a wreath and Victory statuette.⁴⁰ On bronze medallions inscribed *RESTITVTOR REIP[ublicae]*, Constantine repeats an old theme and raises up the kneeling Empire.⁴¹ And on gold multiples, the emperor, crowned by Victory and seated on a military trophy, receives the homage of *Respublica* (fig. 10). She approaches the emperor with mantle billowing behind her and, bowing from the hip, offers a Victory statuette. The emperor and perhaps a military victory are saluted *SALVS ET SPES REIPVBLICAE*.⁴²

At the mid-fourth century, *Respublica* is an established figure in the coinage as these strikes and numerous others would indicate. While the third century bronze medallions of Tacitus mark her first appearance, the development of the image takes place primarily within Constantinian coinage. In addition, it seems significant that at the mid-century *Respublica* is one of only a handful of personifications that survive the radical changes of Diocletian in the late third century and, following a period of relaxation in the early

³⁹ Bruun, *RIC*7, Trier no. 2. The type has an interesting history briefly summarized by Overbeck, *Römische Münze*, no. 635, although his closing argument is followed with difficulty.

⁴⁰ Bruun *RIC*7, Trier nos. 16, 17, 889-91; Ticinum nos. 29, 59; Nicomedia nos. 66, 67; Sirmium nos. 44, 45.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Rome no. 297,. In a clearly related type (Sirmium no. 46), struck by Constantine before his victory over Licinius at Chrysopolis, the emperor raises up a kneeling turreted female in the presence of a Roman soldier. The figure is most likely *Respublica*; the coin legend is a general one, *PERPETVA FELICITAS*. A similar image, dating after Chrysopolis, shows the emperor raising a turreted female in the presence of Roma/*Virtus* and a Victory figure; the legend, *PIETAS AVGVSTI NOSTRI*. Bruun identifies the second, slightly later, turreted figure as Byzantion (p. 592, Nicomedia no. 69). Toynbee ("Roma and Constantinopolis," 137 n. 18) and M. Alföldi (*Goldprägung*, nos. 295, 296) identify Constantinopolis; A. Alföldi ("On the Foundation of Constantinople: A few Notes," *JRS*37 (1947) 12 n. 16) suggests a "symbol for any city of the Empire." Considering the date of the issue, AD 324-25, relative to activities at the site of the future Constantinople, A. Alföldi's reading seems best and is easily harmonized with *Respublica*.

⁴² Bruun, *RIC*7, Constantinople no. 43; Heraclea no. 99. M. Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, nos. 435, 436.

fourth century, an apparent second redefinition or refinement of coin types that begins in the period of Constantine's sole rule.⁴³ *Respublica*'s company is limited. After 324, we meet only Roma, Constantinopolis, *Victoria*, and *Securitas*. Occasional strikes record victories over *Francia*, *Sarmatia*, and *Alemannia*, while traditional values of *Salus* and *Spes* are called up in coin legends but are now apparently represented with the images of living empresses. Even among the few surviving personifications, *Respublica* is distinct. Unlike figures such as *Victoria* and *Securitas*, *Respublica* has no independent image or existence: she is always defined as a visual type in fixed relation to an emperor and that relationship is one of deference if not dependence.

The gold multiples and bronze medallions of Magnentius (figs. 2, 4, and 5) are thus easily understood to participate in a development firmly associated with the house of Constantine. Magnentius does not humble Constantinopolis with the blessings of Roma; he offers largesse to the citizens of the realm in both his name and that of Constantius II (fig. 5). He does not polemically proclaim the capitulation of a single city to the cause of his revolt; he celebrates a larger role of a legitimate ruler charged with the protection of the empire (figs. 2 and 4). To be sure, the Magnentian equestrian type introduces a variation on the theme, but the essential relationship of emperor and grateful *Respublica* remains unchanged. The evidence of the solidus of Constantius II (fig. 6) might even be interpreted to suggest that the equestrian image is perhaps Constantinian, shared by Magnentius. The equestrian type goes on to be repeated in the coinage of Valentinian I and Valens (fig. 11),⁴⁴ and the image of *Respublica* genuflecting before a standing emperor is a prominent

⁴³ For the Diocletianic reform types, see C. H. V. Sutherland, "Flexibility in the 'Reformed' Coinage of Diocletian," *Essays in Roman Coinage* (supra n. 15) 174-89. The Constantinian shift is most commonly discussed in relation to the elimination of pagan divinities from the coins; see, for example, P. Bruun, "The Disappearance of Sol from the Coins of Constantine," *Arctos*, n.s. 2 (1962) 15-37.

⁴⁴ The types are known through barbarian copies. See Kent, *Roman Coins*, no. 707; Overbeck, *Römische Münze*, no. 712; H. von Heintze, *Propylaen Kunstgeschichte*, 2: *Das römische Weltreich*, ed. T. Kraus (Berlin 1967) no. 389d; J. W. E. Pearce, *RIC 9: Valentinian I to Theodosius I* (London 1951) Antioch nos. 37, 38.

type for both the house of Valentinian and the house of Theodosius.⁴⁵ In this context, the modest Magnentian type of *Victoria* and *Libertas* sounds an independent note, although the *Libertas* type itself has a fourth century reference in Constantine's coinage in the years following that successful ruler's triumph over Maxentius.⁴⁶ Even so, the type is isolated within the corpus of Magnentian coinage, which seems more Constantinian than specifically Magnentian.

From comparisons with strikes of Constans and Constantius II, a sense develops of the close relationship of Magnentian issues to existing types, close in date and clearly still in circulation. Magnentius, although or perhaps because he is a usurper, consistently represents himself, his deeds, and the allegories of his rule in the very same imagery employed by the princes of the house of Constantine. Large numbers of his coins, like theirs, celebrate a double *vota suscepta* (VOT[a] V MVL[ta] X) undertaken at the beginning of his reign and do so with the familiar formulae of confronted Victories and inscribed shields. Single Victory figures, popular motifs for generations if not centuries, appear in his coinage. By far the vast majority of his coin images, like those of every other fourth century ruler, are military, with types representing the emperor spearing barbarians from a galloping horse, dragging captives by the hair, standing on, or kicking seated prisoners. In tamer scenes, he stands amidst seated captives or stands alone in military gear, displaying spears, standards, trophies, globes, scepters, and that attribute of a specifically Christian victory, the *labarum*. Magnentius was in fact an illustrious general with claims of victories against barbarians that could have thus been appropriately celebrated. The iconographic types, however, are all of them conventions that precede him and can each be matched at earlier

⁴⁵ Indexed in Pearce, *RIC* 9, under *REPARATIO REIPVB[licae]* and *RESTITVTOR REIPVBLICAE*.

⁴⁶ *VICTORIA AVG[usti] LIB[ertas] ROMANOR[um]*: *Victoria* and *Libertas* holding a trophy between them. For the type, Bastien, *Magnence* 45-46, and his catalogue, *passim*. For the Constantinian reference, see Kellner, *Libertas*: Kellner interprets Magnentius' *Libertas* as an ideal of religious freedom. The perspective seems more modern than Roman.

dates with strikes for Constans, Constantius II, Constantine II, and before them Constantine the Great.⁴⁷

In August of 350, eight months after his revolt began, Magnentius ceased to strike coin for Constantius II in the mints under his control, and the type of Constantius, victor over the Persians, was not issued from western mints until the revolt was ended and the empire reunited.⁴⁸ This action of Magnentius is understood as an outward sign of the end of his diplomatic efforts to win recognition for his rule in the West.⁴⁹ Magnentius' own coinage, however, continued for three more years, issuing from the same imperial mints, carrying the same legends and the same coin types. The individual office holders who staffed his court had nearly all of them changed many times, and most had died in the prolonged struggle. But the offices *per se* remained. The institutions of the mints, once open to the usurper, continued to strike in his name, although the coins grew lighter as the campaign dragged on and the treasuries were depleted. The coin imagery, firmly fixed in the imagery of the house of Constantine, persisted unchanged. They are, to be sure, the coins of a usurper, but they speak with a voice and in a visual language at once familiar and authoritative in the mid-fourth century.

⁴⁷ The types are followed in Bruun, *RIC*7 and R. A. G. Carson, P. V. Hill and J. P. C. Kent, *Late Roman Bronze Coinage* (London 1960).

⁴⁸ For Constantius' type, see K. Kraft, "Die Taten der Kaiser Constans und Constantius II," *JfNG* 9 (1958) 141-86.

⁴⁹ Bastien, *Magnence*, 15-16, 56-57.



Fig. 1. Triple solidus of Magnentius (obverse). Struck at Aquileia, AD 350.



Fig. 2. Triple Solidus of Magnentius (reverse of coin in fig. 1).



Fig. 3. Gold medallion of Constantius Chlorus (reverse). Struck at Trier, AD 296.



Fig. 4. Triple solidus of Magnentius (reverse). Struck at Aquileia, AD 350.

(Courtesy American Numismatic Society, New York.)



Fig. 5. Bronze medallion (reverse). Struck at Rome, AD 350, by Magnentius for Constantius II.



Fig. 6. Solidus of Constantius II (reverse). Struck at Antioch, mid-fourth century.

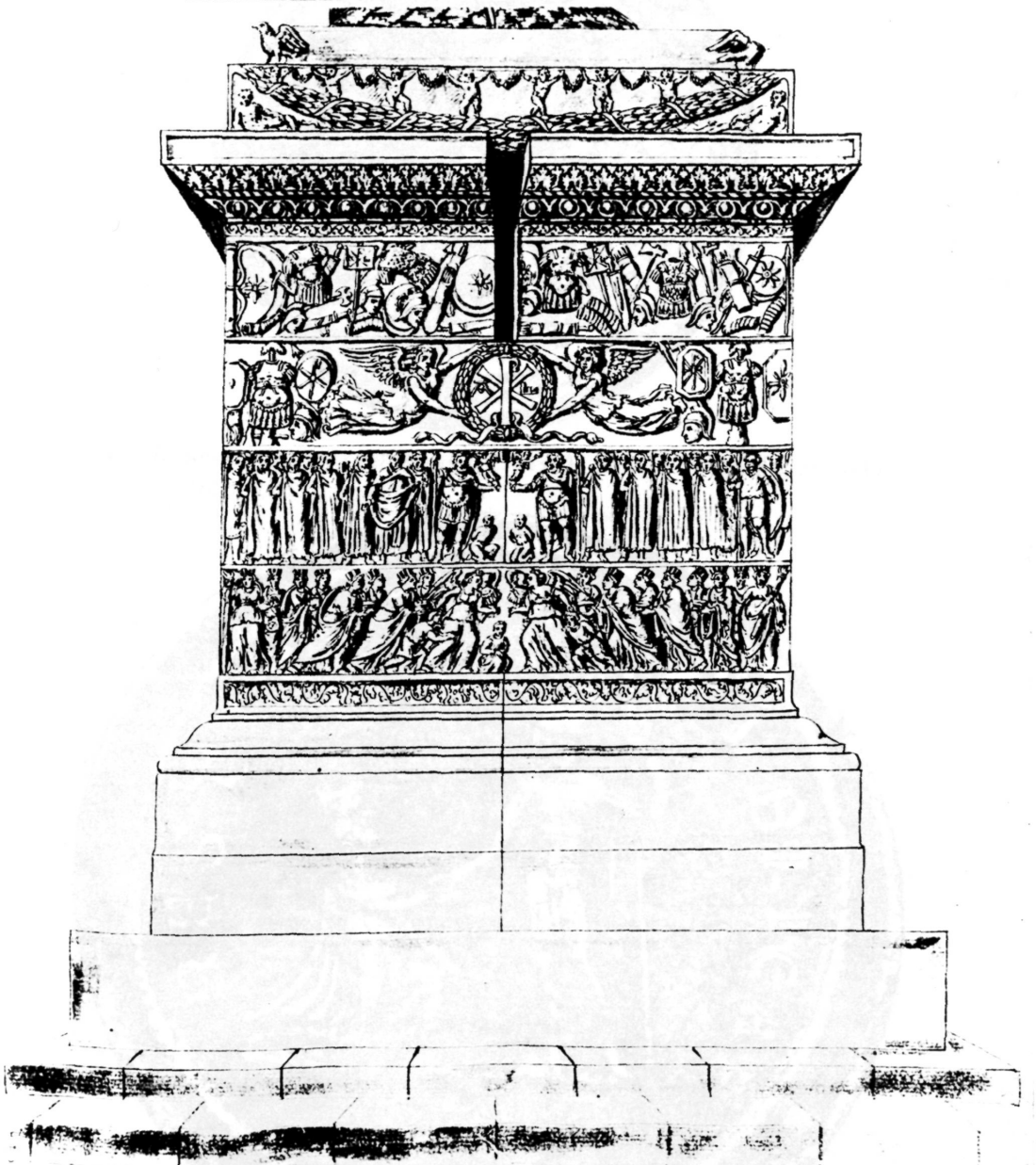


Fig. 7. South face, column base of Arcadius. Constantinople, early fifth century. Drawing from Freshfield codex. (Courtesy Trinity College, Cambridge.)



Fig. 10. Gold multiple of Constantine I (reverse). Struck at Heraclea, ca. AD 324. (Courtesy Bundessammlung von Münzen und Medaillen, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.)



Fig. 11. Barbarian gold medallion (reverse) after an issue of Valentinian I and Valens. Original apparently struck at Antioch, ca. AD 370.

THE UNPUBLISHED SAINT'S LIFE OF THE EMPRESS IRENE (*BHG* 2205)

WARREN T. TREADGOLD / STANFORD, CAL.

The claim of the Empress Irene (780-802) to be regarded as a saint has always been somewhat shaky. It rests almost entirely on her part in condemning iconoclasm by calling the Second Council of Nicaea in 787, and on the favor she showed during her reign to iconophiles, especially to monks. On the other hand, her political ruthlessness in deposing and blinding her son Constantine VI, the legitimate ruler and also an iconophile, shocked even her partisans at the time, and has clouded her memory ever since. Irene's dubious sanctity is doubtless the reason for her being commemorated only briefly and fitfully in synaxaria, and by only one known saint's life, which survives in only one manuscript.¹ This text, entitled *Life of the Holy Empress Irene the Athenian*, is preserved with seven other texts of a hagiographical character in *Vaticanus Graecus* 2014, a manuscript apparently of the mid-twelfth century.² The *Life* has never been published or even analyzed, and it has only infrequently been mentioned by modern scholars. In a recent review, François Halkin has criticized Paul Speck for neglecting it in his otherwise

¹ See *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* III (Brussels, 1957), 38, no. 2205, and references. This article, a shorter form of which was presented as a communication at the Fourteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies at Birmingham, England in April 1980, was written with the support of a Research Fellowship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. I would like to thank Professor Ihor Ševčenko for looking over my translation of the last portion of the *Life of Irene* and professor A. R. Littlewood for looking over both text and translation; of course they bear no responsibility for any errors.

² This is the dating suggested to me by Professor Ševčenko. In the *BHG* François Halkin dates it to the eleventh century, while Gervais Dumeige, *Nicaea II* (Paris, 1979), 262, dates it to the thirteenth. On its contents, see *Analecta Bollandiana* 21 (1902), 14⁶.

comprehensive study of the reign of Constantine VI.³

There are few periods of Byzantine history for which a new source would seem to be so welcome as for the reign of Irene. Apart from this *Life*, practically the only early source for the whole reign is the *Chronographia* of Theophanes Confessor. The *Life of St. Philaretus the Almsgiver*, the *Acta* of the Second Council of Nicaea, a few letters of Theodore of Studium, and a handful of very minor sources provide only a little more information about contemporary political history; the later Byzantine chronicles are derived from Theophanes.⁴ This unique biography of the reigning sovereign, comprising twenty-seven manuscript pages, would therefore appear to rival Theophanes as a source of great importance.

In fact, however, neglect of the *Life of Irene* is not a serious defect in Professor Speck's book. The first twenty-four pages of the *Life* are derived from Theophanes and the *Life of Philaretus*, so that only the last three pages can be considered as an independent historical source. The bulk of the *Life of Irene* is a close paraphrase of the parts of Theophanes' chronicle that mention Irene. The parts of Theophanes that do not mention Irene are usually omitted. The *Life* also omits one event discreditable to Irene, her advising Constantine VI to blind Alexius Musele, but apparently Irene's own blinding of Constantine was too well known to be suppressed, because the *Life* includes it. When Irene's name appears in Theophanes' text, the *Life* sometimes adds an epithet like "famous" or "pious", or an explanatory phrase like "who is the subject of our work". Occasionally the *Life* has put a sentence or two of Theophanes into a different order for no apparent reason. It also omits nearly all the dates given by Theophanes, though it generally includes his subsequent phrase "in this year", leaving the erroneous impression that the events of many years occurred in one. Otherwise Theophanes' text is practically transcribed.

Comparing the beginning of the *Life* with its corresponding passage in Theophanes (the first in which Irene is mentioned) is

³ *Analecta Bollandiana* 97 (1979), 201.

⁴ On Irene's reign and the other sources for it, see Paul Speck, *Kaiser Konstantin VI* (Munich, 1978).

sufficient to show the relationship between the two. After the title, the redactor of the *Life* does not provide any preface or introduction, or even a date, but begins abruptly, "In those times Irene came from Athens to the imperial city"; to find out what times "those" were, one must consult Theophanes. The texts are as follows.

Vat. Gr. 2014, fol. 123r, lines 1-8.

Ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς ἐκείνοις
εἰσῆλθεν Εἰρήνη ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν
ἐν τῇ βασιλευούσῃ πόλει.
Καὶ τοῦ πατριάρχου Νικήτα
ἐλθόντος ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ ἐν τῇ
ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Φάρου ἐγένετο
τὰ πρὸς τὴν αὐτὴν Εἰρήνην
τοῦ βασιλέως Λέοντος σπόνσα·
καὶ μετ' ὀλίγας ἡμέρας
ἐστέφθη ἐν τῷ τρικλινίῳ τοῦ
Αὐγουστέως, καὶ ἀπελθοῦσα
ἐν τῷ εὐκτηρίῳ τοῦ ἁγίου
πρωτομάρτυρος Στεφάνου ἐν τῇ
Δάφνῃ ἔλαβε τὰ τοῦ γάμου
στέφανα σὺν τῷ υἱῷ
Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Καβαλλίνου
Λέοντι τῷ βασιλεῖ.

Theophanes, A.M. 6261, ed. Carl
de Boor (Leipzig, 1883), 444. 15-25.

Τῇ δὲ α' τοῦ Νοεμβρίου μηνὸς
τῆς η' ἰνδικτιῶνος εἰσῆλθεν
Εἰρήνη ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν ἐλθοῦσα ἀπὸ
τῆς Ἱερείας ἐν τῇ βασιλευούσῃ
πόλει... Καὶ τῇ γ' τοῦ αὐτοῦ
Νοεμβρίου μηνὸς τοῦ πατριάρχου
ἐλθόντος ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ ἐν τῇ
ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Φάρου ἐγένετο τὰ
πρὸς τὴν αὐτὴν Εἰρήνην τοῦ
βασιλέως Λέοντος σπόνζα· καὶ
τῇ ιζ' τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου μηνὸς
ἐστέφθη ἐν τῷ τρικλινίῳ τοῦ
Αὐγουστέως ἡ βασίλισσα Εἰρήνη,
καὶ ἀπελθοῦσα ἐν τῷ εὐκτηρίῳ
τοῦ ἁγίου Στεφάνου ἐν τῇ
Δάφνῃ ἔλαβε τὰ τοῦ γάμου
στέφανα σὺν τῷ τοῦ Κωνσταντίνου
υἱῷ Λέοντι τῷ βασιλεῖ.

Here the redactor has not added a single piece of significant information that is not in Theophanes, though he has inserted the name of the Patriarch Nicetas from other portions of Theophanes' chronicle.

This passage is fairly typical of the method of paraphrasing used in the *Life*. The following table of passages in the *Life* that are paraphrased from Theophanes shows how the method was applied. The table does not note the few cases in which the redactor transposed a sentence or two within a passage.

<i>Life of Irene</i> (Vat. Gr. 2014)	Theophanes (ed. de Boor)
fol. 123r. 1-8	A.M. 6261, 444. 15-25
123r. 8-10	A.M. 6262, 445. 12-14
123r. 10-123v.6	A.M. 6267, 448. 12-28
123v.6-124v.2	A.M. 6268, 449. 11-450. 23
124v.2-9	A.M. 6272, 453. 4-10
124v.9-16	A.M. 6272, 453. 25-30
124v.17-23	A.M. 6273, 454. 6-12
124v. 23-125r. 11	A.M. 6273, 455. 8-17
125r. 11-19	A.M. 6274, 455. 19-25
125r. 19-125v. 4	A.M. 6276, 457. 6-11
125v. 4-126r. 7	A.M. 6276, 457. 13-458. 6
126r. 7-127v. 19	A.M. 6277, 458. 10-460. 17
127v. 20-128r. 12	A.M. 6277, 460. 23-461. 6
128r. 12-128v. 8	A.M. 6278, 461. 12-462. 3
128v. 8-12	A.M. 6279, 462. 18-22
128v. 12-129r. 5	A.M. 6280, 462. 27-463. 13
129r. 6-9, 12-16, (for 9-12, see below)	A.M. 6281, 463. 21-28
129r. 16-130r. 3	A.M. 6282, 464. 10-465. 11
130r. 3-130v. 10	A.M. 6283, 466. 10-467. 6
130v. 10-14	A.M. 6284, 467. 17-21
130v. 14-16	A.M. 6284, 467. 27-28
130v. 16-131r. 6	A.M. 6284, 468. 7-21
131r. 7-11	A.M. 6287, 469. 23-26
131r. 11-13	A.M. 6287, 470. 1-3
131r. 13-131v. 6	A.M. 6288, 470. 10-21
131v. 6-15	A.M. 6289, 471. 8-18
131v. 16-132v. 8	A.M. 6289, 471. 20-472. 22
132v. 8-12	A.M. 6291, 474. 6-11
132v. 12-15	A.M. 6293, 475. 15-18
132v. 15-133r. 21	A.M. 6295, 476. 4-29
133r. 21-134v. 19	A.M. 6295, 477. 11-479. 4
134v. 19-22	A.M. 6295, 480. 3-6
134v. 22-135r. 6	A.M. 6295, 479. 4-10
135v. 6-7	A.M. 6295, 479. 9-10
136r. 6-7	A.M. 6295, 480. 6-7

Thus every passage in the *Life* as far as 135 *recto*, line 6 has a parallel in Theophanes.

These close parallels make the text of the *Life of Irene* a secondary witness to the text of Theophanes. In most cases, however, differences between the two texts seem likely to be the result of the redactor's paraphrasing and not of a variant in his manuscript of the *Chronographia*. In some other cases, it is difficult to be sure whether a difference is due to paraphrasing or to a variant. On the whole, however, the *Life* seems to have been based on a manuscript of Theophanes with very few corruptions. At folio 123v. 9, for example, corresponding to Theophanes 449. 13-14, the *Life* confirms de Boor's conjecture of τοὺς ἐν τέλει for the τοὺς ἐν τῇ πόλει which is the reading of all surviving manuscripts of Theophanes. Here the *Life* and de Boor are surely right, since Anastasius Bibliothecarius' early translation of Theophanes has *optimates*. At folio 126r. 16, the *Life* describes Tarasius, before he became Patriarch of Constantinople, as πρωταδοικρήτην, though de Boor's text (458. 17-18) reads simply ἀδοικρήτην. Other manuscripts of Theophanes have ἀδοικρήτην or ἀσηκρήτην, and Anastasius has a *secretis*. Here the *Life*'s reading appears preferable, because α' ἀδοικρήτην (= πρωταδοικρήτην) is more likely to have been corrupted into ἀδοικρήτην than the reverse, while, as Paul Lemerle has noted, the *Life of St. Tarasius* clearly implies that Tarasius had been *protasecretis*, head of the imperial chancery, and not merely one of the imperial secretaries.⁵ Though I have not found any other variants of much interest, some might appear from a more thorough study of the *Life* and a complete edition, which could determine the archetype's exact place in the stemma of manuscripts of Theophanes.⁶

⁵ *Le premier humanisme byzantin* (Paris, 1971), 129 and n. 76. On the office of protasecretis, see N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX^e et X^e siècles* (Paris, 1972), 310-11.

⁶ Also perhaps worth noting is 134r. 4-5, where the *Life* reads ἡγοῦμαι συλλήπτωρα καὶ ἐκδικητὴν and our manuscripts of Theophanes (478.5) read simply ἡγοῦμαι. Since this is a speech by Irene, the *Life* was probably following its archetype closely, and the extra three words probably go back to Theophanes. For another witness to the text of Theophanes not used by de Boor, see Nigel Wilson, "A Manuscript of Theophanes at Oxford," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 26 (1972), 357-60.

The one passage in which the *Life* has added information from the *Life of Philaretus* concerns Constantine VI's marriage to Maria of Amnia in 788. Here the redactor has both reworked and interpolated Theophanes' text.

Vat. Gr. 2014, 129r. 6-12

Τούτῳ τῷ ἔτει λύσασα ἡ
 βασίλισσα Εἰρήνη τὴν πρὸς
 τοὺς Φράγγους συναλλαγὴν
 ἀπέλυσε Θεοφάνην τὸν
 πρωτοσπαθάριον, καὶ ἤγαγε
 κόρην ἐκ τῆς τῶν Παφλαγόνων
 ἐπαρχίας ἀπὸ χωρίου Ἀμνείας
 ὀνόματι Μαρίαν, ἧς ὁ πάππος
 ἐκαλεῖτο Φιλάρετος, ὅστις
 καὶ ἐλεῆμων ὑπῆρχε καθ' ὑπερβολὴν· καὶ ταύτης προσαχθῆσης τῇ
 βασιλίδι ἰδὼν τὸ περίον (περὶ δὲ cod.) αὐτῇ κάλλος τῆς τε ψυχῆς
 καὶ τοῦ σώματος ἔξευξεν αὐτὴν Κωνσταντίνῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ (τῷ) καὶ
 υἱῷ αὐτῆς...

Theophanes, A.M. 6281, 463. 21-24

Λύσασα δὲ ἡ βασίλισσα Εἰρήνη
 τὴν πρὸς τοὺς Φράγγους
 συναλλαγὴν ἀπέλυσε Θεοφάνην
 τὸν πρωτοσπαθάριον, καὶ
 ἤγαγε κόρην ἐκ τῶν Ἀρμενιάκων
 ὀνόματι Μαρίαν ἀπὸ Ἀμνείας,
 καὶ ἔξευξεν αὐτὴν Κωνσταντίνῳ
 τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ υἱῷ αὐτῆς...

The passage in the *Life* may be translated, "In this year, having abrogated the treaty with the Franks, the Empress Irene sent out Theophanes the Protospatharius, and he brought a girl from the Province of the Paphlagonians, from the village of Amneia, Maria by name, whose grandfather was named Philaretus, a man who was also exceedingly charitable; and when she was brought to the imperial city, seeing her surpassing beauty of both soul and body, he [Theophanes] married her to Constantine, the emperor and her [Irene's] son..." Evidently the redactor of the *Life* misunderstood Theophanes' text at this point, because in the *Chronographia* Irene must be the one who married Maria to Constantine, while in the *Life* it is Theophanes the Protospatharius, to whom the masculine participle ἰδὼν must refer.

The facts that the redactor has added to Theophanes' account are that Amnia (or Amneia, a spelling also found in some manuscripts of Theophanes) was located in the Theme of Paphlagonia, that Maria was the granddaughter of Philaretus the Almsgiver, and that she was chosen to be Constantine's wife because of her moral and physical beauty. The second and third facts could conceivably have been learned from hearsay, which was probably the source of a scholion in

one manuscript of Theophanes that calls Maria "The daughter (*sic*) of Philaretus, celebrated for his almsgiving."⁷ But no such error in the *Life of Irene* betrays an oral source, and the fact that the obscure village of Amnia was in Paphlagonia does not seem likely to have been recorded in another place than the *Life of Philaretus*.⁸ Without this information, the redactor would naturally have assumed that Amnia, which had been in the Armeniac Theme when Theophanes wrote before 815, was still a part of it, though between 815 and 826 Paphlagonia had been detached from the Armeniacs (not, as has often been said, from the Bucellarians) and made a separate theme.⁹ The *Life of Irene* was evidently written after Paphlagonia became a theme and after the *Life of Philaretus* was composed in 821/822.¹⁰

This brings us to the part of the *Life of Irene* that apparently has no parallels elsewhere. It begins after a paraphrase of Theophanes' account of how the Emperor Nicephorus I, who had just overthrown Irene, first broke his promise to allow her to live in Constantinople and exiled her to a convent that she had founded on the island of Prinkipo, and then changed the place of her exile to Lesbos. The following text and translation retain the folio and line numbers of the manuscript. Abbreviations are expanded and orthographic errors corrected without mention in the apparatus unless they might possibly affect the meaning or the form of the words.

⁷ τοῦ Φιλαρέτου θυγάτριον τοῦ ἐπὶ ἐλεημοσύνης περιβοήτου. Theophanes, ed. de Boor, apparatus to 463.23.

⁸ On the location of Amnia, see M. -H. Fourmy and M. Leroy, "La vie de Saint Philarète," *Byzantion* 9 (1934), 135.

⁹ See Treadgold, "Notes on the Numbers and Organization of the Ninth-Century Byzantine Army," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 21 (1980) 286-87.

¹⁰ On the date of the *Life of Philaretus*, see Fourmy and Leroy (cited n. 8), 96.

Vat. Gr. 2014, fols. 135r. 6-136r. 23

ᾠ τῆς βίας. ᾠ τῆς ἀντιμισθίας. ᾠ ποία ἀντιποί/ων ἀνταπέδωκεν αὐτῇ ὁ ἐπίορκος καὶ δολερὸς βασιλεύς.

/Μελλούσης δὲ ἀπαίρειν πρὸς τὴν ἐξορίαν τῆς αἰοιδίμου ἐν βασι/λεύσιν Εἰρήνης, κράξασα τὴν Ἀβραμαϊαν καὶ πανεύφημον [10] τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπον τὴν καὶ πρωτίστην ὑπάρχουσαν τῶν εὐλαβεστάτων /ἐκείνων γυναικῶν, οὕτως ἔλεγεν· «Δέξαι τουτονὶ τὸν οἰκίσκον, /ὦ φίλη μήτηρ, τοῦ σοῦ τιμίου σώματος καὶ τῶν σὺν σοὶ μελλόντων ἀποτάσσεσθαι τῷ κόσμῳ σμικρότατον καταγώγιον. Δέξαι τοῦτον /τὸν οἰκίσκον ἐμοῦ τε καὶ πολλῶν ἐσόμενον ἱλαστήριον· εἰ γὰρ [15] καὶ ξένον προκέκλησαι καὶ σχῆμα καὶ ὄνομα, ἀλλ' οἶδας τοὺς /ἐγχωρίους ψυχαφελῶς ὑποδέχεσθαι. Δέξαι τῆς ἐμῆς βακτη/ρίας τὸ ποίμνιον· ῥάβδος γὰρ ταύτην οὐ πημανεῖ τῆς συν/τρίψεως. Σὺ τῆς ἐμῆς μάνδρας γενοῦ προεξάρχουσα· πᾶν /εὖ οἶδα ὑπέκει σοι πειθηνίως τὸ ποίμνιον· οἶδα τῶν ἐμῶν /θρημάτων τὴν ἐπὶ τὰ κρείττω ἐπίδοσιν. Ἐκθρεψον ταῦτα [20] καὶ ὁδήγησον ἐπὶ πηγὴν ἀναπαύσεως, καὶ ἐπὶ τόπον χλόης /κατάσκιον. Σὺ λοιπὸν καὶ ἐπαύξησον καὶ ὁδήγησον καὶ εἰς τὴν [135v] ἄνω μάνδραν σὺν τούτῳ εἰσέλασον· ἀπὸ γὰρ τοῦ νῦν οὐχ ἔξεις με /σαρκικῶς σοι προσμένουσαν· ἔξεις δὲ με πνευματικῶς συμπομαίνου/σαν.» Ταῦτα πρὸς αὐτὴν ἔξειπούσα τὰ ῥήματα καὶ πάντα /τὰ τῆς μονῆς εὐθυβόλως διασκέψασα πράγματα, πρὸς τὴν τῆς [5] ἐξορίας ὁδὸν ἠπείγετο (λέγω δὴ τῆς Λέσβου νήσου) σὺν πολλῷ /πλήθει καὶ οἰμωγῇ δακρύων, μάλιστα προστάξαντος τοῦ ἀσε/βοῦς ἀνακτος τοῦ παρά τινος μὴ ὀρᾶσθαι τὸ σύνολον.

Νῦν /καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος μετὰ τοῦ πνευματοφόρου Δαυίδ εἰπεῖν· /«Ἐγγὺς κύριος τοῖς συντετριμμένοις τῇ καρδίᾳ, καὶ τοὺς ταπεινοὺς [10] τῷ πνεύματι σώσει.» Καὶ πάλιν· «Ἐγγὺς κύριος τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις /αὐτὸν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ· θέλημα τῶν φοβουμένων αὐτὸν ποιήσει· /καὶ τῆς δεήσεως αὐτῶν εἰσακούσεται, καὶ σώσει αὐτούς.» Καὶ /πάλιν· «Ἐνεδρεύσωμεν τὸν δίκαιον, ὅτι δύσχετος ἡμῖν ἐστὶ /καὶ βαρὺς,» φησὶν, «καὶ βλεπόμενος.» «Μακάριος γάρ,» φησὶν, «ὃς ὑπομένει [15] πειρασμόν.»

Ἐπεὶ δὲ τὴν εἰς Χριστὸν ἐπόθει ἀνάλυσιν καὶ τὴν /τῆς φθορᾶς ἐκροὴν μεταθέσθαι, πρὸς ἀφθαρσίαν δι' ἀθανα/σίας κατέσπευδεν. Προσκαλεσαμένη τοὺς συνόντας αὐτῇ, /τοιαῦτα πω, καὶ

τὰ ἔσχατα πνέουσα, ὡς ἐκ πνεύματος ἔφασκεν· / «Ἐγὼ μὲν, ὦ σεμνὴ νεολαία καὶ τῆς ἐμῆς φοιτείας κατάκαρπα [20] κλήματα, τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων, ὡς ἡ τῆς θείας προνοίας ῥοπὴ / ταλαντεύει, τὸ χρέος τετέλευκα· καὶ τῆς φθαρτῆς ζωῆς τὸ ἐπίκηρον / ὑπεξέρχομαι. Ἄραντες οὖν τὸ λείψανόν μου, ἀπόθεσθε αὐτὸ [136r] ἐν τῷ ναῷ τῆς πανάγνου θεοτόκου ἐν τῷ εὐωνύμῳ μέρει ἐν τῷ / σπικῷ τοῦ ἁγίου Νικολάου ἐν τῇ θεοφυλάκτῳ νήσῳ τῆς Πριγκίπου, / ἐν τῇ μονῇ ἣν αὐτὴ ἐξ ἐπιπόνου καὶ ὀδυνηρᾶς μου καρδίας ᾠκο/δόμησα.» Ταῦτα τὰ εὐκταῖα ῥήματα πρὸς τοὺς ἐκείσε ἐξιποῦσα [5] τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς ἡνίας ἐν χερσὶ τοῦ σοφῶς κυβερνῶντος τὰ σύμπαντα / ἐναπέθετο θεοῦ, μῆνι Αὐγούστῳ θ' ἰνδικτιώνος ια' ἔτει σια' ἐν τῇ ἑξορίᾳ / τῆς Λέσβου νήσου.

Πάσης δὲ τιμῆς ἐπιταφίου τὸ θεοεἶκελον ἐκείνο / σῶμα πρὸς τῆς θείας ἀπολαύσαν ὁμηγύρεως προπέμπεται / μετὰ τῆς ἐνθύνου ψαλμικῆς ὑπηγήσεως πρὸς τὴν ἐκεῖ μετ' ἡχου [10] καθαροῦ τῶν ἑορταζόντων κατοίκησιν· καὶ ἀποτίθεται τὸ τίμιον / αὐτῆς καὶ ἅγιον λείψανον ἐν τῇ θεοφυλάκτῳ τῆς Πριγκίπου νήσῳ ἐξ εὐ/ωνύμου μέρους τοῦ πανσέπτου ναοῦ τῆς θεομήτορος ἐν καινοτάτῳ / λάρνακι, ἔνθα τὸ ἱερὸν ἐκείνο συναθροιζόμενον ποίμνιον / κατ' ἔτος τῆς θείας μνήμης αὐτῆς ὑμολογικῶς ἐπιθειάζεται [15] τὸ εὐφρόσυνον, καὶ ταύτην πρεσβευτὴν καὶ φύλακα καὶ στηριγμὸν / ἀσφαλῆ καὶ κραταίωμα κέκτηται. Αὕτη οὖν τὴν ἑαυτῆς ποί/μνην ἐρείδουσα καὶ στηρίζουσα πάσης τηρεῖ διαβολικῆς ἐπηρείας / ἀλώβητον· ταύτῃ τειχιζομένη πᾶσαν ἐπικειμένην παρά/ταξιν δαιμονικὴν ἀπεκρούεται· ταύτην καὶ πρὸς τὴν οὐρανίαν [20] βασιλείαν προπέμψασα, δι' αὐτῆς ἀναμένει καὶ τὴν ἐκεῖ κατασκή/νωσιν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, ὃ πρέπει σὺν τῷ παντοκράτορι / πατρὶ καὶ τῷ ζωοποιῷ πνεύματι δόξα, κράτος, τιμὴ καὶ προσκύνησις, νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ / καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

135r. 7. αὐτὴ cod. δολεργῶς cod.

17. ποιμανεῖ cod.

19. ὑπῆκει cod.

135v. 4. διασκήψασα cod.

6-7. εὐσεβοῦς cod.

21. ἐπικέειρον cod.

136r. 2 περιχίλου cod.

3. ἡ αὐτῇ cod.

11. περιγύλου cod.

Translation

[135r. 6] What violence! What a requital! Returning such things did the perjured and treacherous Emperor repay her!

When the illustrious Empress Irene was about to depart into exile, calling upon the Abraham-like and all-praiseworthy woman of God who was the first of those most pious women, she spoke thus: "Receive this little house, dear mother, the most humble abode of your own worthy body and of those who intend to take leave of the world together with you. Receive this little house, which will be my place of propitiation and that of many; for even though you have been called [here] as a foreigner in both appearance and name, still you know how to receive natives to profit their souls. Receive the flock of my staff; for the rod of destruction will not afflict it. You be the leader of my fold; for I know very well the flock submits to you obediently. I know the progress of my lambs toward higher things. Rear them, and lead them to a spring of repose, and to a shady spot of grass. You, then, both increase and lead them, and [135v] at the same time drive them into the fold above; for from now on you will not have me cleaving to you in the flesh, but you will have me as your fellow-shepherdess in the spirit." Saying these words to her, and having carefully considered all the affairs of the convent, she hastened to the way of exile (I mean of the island of Lesbos), with a great abundance and lamentation of tears, because the impious Emperor had especially ordered that the whole business should not be seen by anyone.

Now is the appropriate time to say with the inspired David: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps. 35:19). And again: "The Lord is nigh unto... them... that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of

them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them" (Ps. 145:18-19). And again: "... Let us lie in wait for the righteous; because he is not for our turn, and... is grievous," he says, "... even to behold" (Wis. 2:12, 14). For "Blessed," he says, "is the man who endureth temptation" (Jas. 1:12).

But when she was anxious to pursue her departure to Christ and her release from corruption, she hastened toward incorruptibility through immortality. Having summoned those who were with her, she spoke as if from the Spirit, even when breathing her last, more or less such words as these: "O holy band of maidens and fruitful grafts of my teaching, I have fulfilled the obligation of mortals, as the balance of divine providence weighs it out, and I am withdrawing from the mortality of this corruptible life. Therefore, taking my corpse, lay it [136r] in the church of the all-pure Theotokos, in the left part, in the chapel of St. Nicholas, in the God-guarded island of Prinkipo, in the convent which I myself built with my suffering and painful heart." Saying these words of supplication to those who were there, she put the reins of her soul into the hands of God Who guides everything wisely, on the ninth of August of the twelfth indiction in the year 6311 [803] in her exile of the island of Lesbos.

That godlike body, having enjoyed every funeral honor at the house of the godly congregation [on Lesbos], was sent forth with the prompting of psalms in that place to the other place [Prinkipo], with the pure voice of the celebrants. And her venerable and holy corpse was laid in the God-guarded island of Prinkipo, in the left part of the all-holy church of the Mother of God in a brand-new tomb. Gathering there, that holy flock invokes the delight of her holy memory every year in hymns, and has acquired her as intercessor, guardian, sure support, and strength. Thus she, supporting and upholding her own flock, keeps it safe from every insult of the Devil. Protected by her as by a wall, it drives off every attacking vanguard of demons. Having also sent her forth to the kingdom of heaven, through her it too awaits its camp there in Christ Jesus our Lord, to Whom, with the all-ruling Father and the life-giving Spirit, glory, power, honor, and worship are fitting, now and forever, and unto the ages of the ages. Amen.

The style of this portion of the *Life* is best described as an attempt to write in fairly high style by an author without enough education to do so. At least some of the frequent orthographic errors appear to have been made by the author. The pun at 135r. 17 on ποίμνιον/πημανεῖ suggests that the author thought ποιμανεῖ was the correct spelling; the fact that the *Life*'s first two pages include only five misspellings while the last two pages include twenty-two suggests that the author could copy the correct spelling of Theophanes but had trouble avoiding spelling errors when deprived of a model. The Scriptural quotations are not well chosen or presented, showing a negligence (or at least reticence) also evident in the author's adding no preface to the *Life*. The account of the translation of Irene's body from Lesbos to Prinkipo is confusingly worded, and what sort of establishment Irene had on Lesbos is not explained. The name of the nun to whom Irene entrusted her convent on Prinkipo is not mentioned, making the reference to her as "a foreigner in both appearance and name" obscure.

Part of the *Life*'s obscurity is evidently due to the author's ignorance of what had happened. The characterization of Irene's dying words as "more or less such words as these" is an implied admission that they were not recorded as such in a source. The author knew from Theophanes that Irene had been exiled first to Prinkipo and then to Lesbos, that Nicephorus had ordered her second deportation to take place in secret, and that Irene had died on August 9, 803¹¹ In this case, the date was so important that the author took the trouble to convert it from the Alexandrian Era used by Theophanes to the Byzantine Era; in other cases, the *Life*'s aversion to repeating Theophanes' dates seems to show a reluctance to take that trouble.

It would be strange if the author had known that the nun who succeeded Irene as abbess on Prinkipo had a foreign name but had not known what the name was. Perhaps the author left her name out inadvertently, or found it too barbaric to suit the desired high style; or conceivably her name was Xena and the reference to her being "a foreigner in both appearance and name" is a pun. At any rate, the

¹¹ Theophanes, 479.4-10 and 480.6-9.

author does seem to have had some independent information on Irene's last days and place of burial, perhaps from a combination of oral tradition at Irene's convent and actually seeing her tomb there.

The *Life*'s last three pages definitely show a special interest in the convent founded by Irene on Prinkipo. Irene's successor as abbess is praised, and Irene's instructions to her are reported carefully. Irene's dying wish is said to be for burial in the convent in a precise place, and the *Life* notes not only that she was buried there but that her cult is continued by the nuns, who gather about her tomb to commemorate her yearly (presumably on August 9, her feast day) and regard her as their particular protector. The tone of the account points naturally to the conclusion that the *Life* was composed specifically for the convent, perhaps even by one of the nuns. Whether or not Irene had specified her burial place as precisely as the *Life* says she did, the author knew that at the time of writing, her tomb was in the chapel of St. Nicholas in the left part of the Church of the Theotokos on Prinkipo.

This fact is interesting for two reasons. First, though Theophanes confirms (without giving details) that Irene was buried on Prinkipo, the catalogue of imperial tombs in the *De Caeremoniis* records that by the tenth century she was buried in the Mausoleum of Justinian in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople. Philip Grierson has proposed to explain this discrepancy by noting that the tomb of Constantine V was removed from the Mausoleum of Justinian and destroyed under Michael III, probably between 861 and 864, and conjecturing that Michael had the vacant place filled by transferring Irene's body from Prinkipo. As Grierson observed, honoring the body of Irene, the restorer of the icons, would have been a complementary gesture to dishonoring that of Constantine V, the arch-iconoclast; and it is hard to see how else Irene could have been accommodated in the mausoleum, which was apparently full after Theophilus' burial there in 842.¹² Though the conjecture that Irene was transferred between 861 and 864 is not quite certain, if it is

¹² Philip Grierson, "The Tombs and Obits of the Byzantine Emperors (337-1042)," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962), 33-34, 53-54, and 55.

correct our *Life* must have been composed before then. We have already seen that it was composed after 821/22, and as an obviously iconophile document it can hardly have been composed before the second restoration of the icons in 843. It may even have been written as an attempt by the nuns to forestall a proposal to deprive them of the body of their patroness in 861/864, by appealing to Irene's alleged dying wishes and stressing her status as the convent's protector.¹³ Seemingly by the reign of Michael III the author had difficulty finding sources for Irene's life apart from Theophanes; but after all the search for sources may not have been a very diligent one.

The second interesting feature of the *Life's* account of Irene's burial is its mentioning that the church of the convent on Prinkipo was dedicated to the Theotokos. This convent was a place of considerable historical importance. Besides Irene, its nuns included Megalo, the wife of Theophanes Confessor, probably the Empress Maria of Amnia, first wife of Constantine VI; the Empress Euphrosyne, daughter of Constantine VI and second wife of Michael II; temporarily the Empress Zoë, daughter of Constantine VIII and wife of Romanus III, Michael IV, and Constantine IX; and, also temporarily, Anna Dalassena, mother of Alexius I. But in none of the sources that mention these figures is the convent named, and in Raymond Janin's listing of churches and monasteries it is left nameless.¹⁴ On the probable assumption that the convent had the same dedication as its church, we may now call it the Convent of the Theotokos.

The *Life of Irene* is not a major historical source, and a complete edition of it is not among the most pressing needs of Byzantine studies. Still, it does contain some independent material, and can contribute something to our knowledge of the text of Theophanes, the Patriarch Tarasius' career, Irene's last days, and her convent and

¹³ I am indebted to Professor Averil Cameron for this suggestion.

¹⁴ *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975), 69, with bibliography on the convent's history.

tomb. It is also an unusual literary specimen, because though saints' lives are often drawn mostly from a single source they are seldom drawn mostly from a chronicle.

ICONOCLASM AND LEIPSANOCLASM: LEO III, CONSTANTINE V AND THE RELICS

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It is at least rather surprising that so little attention had been paid to the question of the iconoclasts' attitude towards the holy relics until Stephen Gero opened up the matter in his recent books on Byzantine Iconoclasm.¹ Icons and relics, or rather the quality of the devotion paid to each, are obviously closely related matters, linked by the previous question of the role accorded to the saints whom both in their peculiar way are held to represent. Insofar as that role is diminished, so must the validity of both icon and relic be called into question. Now iconoclasm as we know of it was something which emanated from the Capital: it was there, no matter where the original idea sprung from, that the idea was translated into action, and from there that directives emanated to give that action force. Yet it was not for its icons that Constantinople was chiefly famous. Icons there undoubtedly were in the City, some quite famous ones, but at no point in its long history were these ever so numerous or famous as her relics.² By dint of steady acquisition, the Queen of Cities had by

¹ Stephen Gero, *Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Leo III, with Particular Attention to the Oriental Sources*, CSCO 346; *Subsidia*, 41 (Louvain, 1973), and *Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Constantine V, with Particular Attention to the Oriental Sources*, CSCO 348; *Subsidia*, 52 (Louvain, 1977) - hereinafter BI¹ and BI² respectively.

² It is noticeable in this respect that Fulcher of Chartres mentions the relics, but says nothing of icons in his exclamation over the city: "O quanta civitas nobilis et decora! quot monasteria, quot palatia sunt in ea, opere miro fabrefacta! quot etiam in plateis vel vicis opera ad spectandum mirabilia! Taedium est magnum recitare quanta sit ibi bonorum omnium opulentia, auri scilicet, argenti, palliorum multiforium, sanctorumque reliquiarum." (*Historia Hierosolymitanac.* 9) Some of the foreign pilgrims to the Capital do mention some of the icons (e.g. Anon. Mercati, Anthony of Novgorod,) but it is in the *relics* that their interest chiefly lies.

the eighth century provided herself with an array of holy relics greater (both in number and in variety) than any other city in Christendom,³ crowned by the importation of the Wood of the True Cross, the most important of all relics, by Heraclius in 629 or 634.⁴

The Byzantines certainly did not treat their City's relics merely as *mirabilia* nor limit their devotion to them to interest and wonder. They used them as sources of *dynamis* in sickness, in danger and in any other kind of adversity; and they credited them with an extraordinary variety of *miracula*, both public and private.⁵ One can be sure that if there were excesses in the devotion of the people to their icons, there would be more (and possibly even more extravagant) excesses, more widely spread, amongst the devotees of

³There are approximately twenty-five cases of alleged relic-acquisition by the Capital during the period 350-450 alone, not all of which can be accepted without reservation, but then nor is it to be expected that all acquisitions during that period have been recorded either. The true number may have been considerably higher.

⁴Nicephorus Patriarchês. *Breviarium* ed. De Boor, p. 29; Theophanes. *Chronographia*, ed. De Boor, 1:337, 8-10.

⁵Although relics were frequently used in defence of the City *after* the eighth century, and were frequently *then* said so to have been used in former times, it is by no means certain that the latter statement is true. The remarks of later historians notwithstanding, relics do not appear to have played a significant role in any of the three first great sieges of Constantinople (but see the following note.) In 626, it was a copy of the *Acheiropoiêtos* Icon that Sergius paraded around the City walls (see Jan Louis van Dielen, *Geschichte der Patriarchen von Sergios I bis Johannes VI.* [Amsterdam, 1972], *Exkurs I*: "Welches Bild trug Patriarch Sergios am 29 Juli 626?" pp. 174-178.) There is no mention in any respectable source of either icon or relic being used to put the foe to flight either in 674-678 or in 717-718. Greek fire produced the required miracle in both those situations.

the holy relics.⁶ And devotion to the relics was institutionalised in a way that devotion to the icons was not, or only rarely so. Many a saint's *synaxis* (though not all) was held in the presence and in honour of his/her mortal remains. It is to be expected, if the object of the exercise was primarily to root out undesirable excesses of devotion at the Capital, or to downgrade the role of the saints in the order of things, that any movement towards either of those ends (or both, for they are closely related) would have singled out the relics, rather than the icons as the first object of attack.

That this was not perceived to have been the case by later

⁶ A clear case of what must have seemed to some an alarming trend in relic-devotion is provided by an address to the personified Girdle of the Holy Mother (conserved at Chalcoprateia) written by the Patriarch Germanus I (715-730). It should perhaps be pointed out to those who suspect that these are really the words of Germanus II (1222-1240) that they are scarcely compatible with a post-1204 situation:

"Oh august girdle, surrounding thy [the Virgin's] City and caressing it, and preserving it from being overthrown by the onslaught of the Barbarian...

Preserve thine inheritance and thy people, oh all-pure girdle of the all-pure one; be to us strength and help, a wall and a battlement, a haven and a safe refuge".

(Germani Patriarchae, *Oratio in encaenia venerandae aedis Sanctissimae Dominae nostrae Dei Genetricis, inque sanctas Fascias Domini nostri Jesu Christi aut in Sanctae Mariae Zonam*, PG 98: 372-384; 377B,D.

This should be compared with Constantine Porphyrogenitus' famous address to the personified *Mandylion* of Edessa:

"Oh, divine likeness of the likeness of the invariable Father! Oh, figure of Him who is the figure of the Person of the Father! Oh venerable and all-honourable signification of the archetype, the glorious Christ of our God! (I address thee in faith as a living thing).

Do thou save and protect for ever him who piously and humbly reigns, who celebrates magnificently the memorial of thine immigration, whom by thy presence thou hast elevated to the throne of his father and grandfather;

preserve his successors from generation to generation in possession of imperial rule!

Grant to the state peaceful tranquility!

Keep this imperial City free of siege!

And grant that we who delight in your archetype, Christ our God,

may be received into His heavenly kingdom,

glorifying and praising Him,

for to Thee are due glory and

worship, for ever and ever. Amen."

Narratio de Imagine Edessena (PG 113:424-453,) c.31.

generations is clear from the fact that we speak of the purgation of the eighth and ninth centuries not as *leipsanoclasm* but as *iconoclasm*. Yet, if we are to take the extant records at face value, the relics did not altogether escape the refining fire of the earlier iconoclast emperors, Leo III and Constantine V.⁷ Can those records be taken at face value though? If we were to go by sheer weight of numbers, it would be almost impossible to resist the deafening roar of tenth century writers claiming that Leo and Constantine perpetuated dreadful atrocities upon the holy relics and their devotees. Yet it is hardly necessary to point out that all those writers wrote at least one generation (and mostly more than one) removed from the end of the first phase of iconoclasm; that some of them smarted from the lash of iconoclast wrath in one way or another, and that all probably shared Theophanes' conviction that Constantine V was Antichrist, Leo his precursor. In order to arrive at a meaningful estimate of the situation, it might be advantageous to set aside for a moment the ninth century chorus and to concentrate on the very much smaller dossier of evidence originating within or close to the period from the accession of Leo (717) to the death of Constantine in 775.

So far as the reign of Leo is concerned (717-40), evidence is notoriously scarce. *Faut de mieux*, this is what Theophanes said of him well over half-a-century later:

[Leo] not only erred concerning the customary reverence of the holy icons, but also in the matter of the intercessions of the all-holy God-bearer and of all the saints. And the all-abominable one made loathsome (ἐβδελύττετο) their relics, as did the Arabs, his teachers.⁸

Inevitably the suspicion exists that Theophanes may here be visiting the sins of the son upon the father, but it may not be so. The restraint of the allegations gives them credence, for he does not allege any more (and he alleges considerably more of Constantine) than that Leo spoke disparagingly of the intercessions of saints and

⁷ It is only of the first two Iconoclast emperors that antipathy to the holy relics is alleged. Never was such an accusation brought against the ninth-century emperors, even against Theophilus. For the main accusations, see Gero, *BP* pp. 97-102; *BP* p. 153 and p. 161, n. 53.

⁸ Theophanes 1:406.22-25.

of their relics. It is known that between 726 and 730, Leo pursued a propaganda campaign against the icons, seeking to win people over to his point of view; it is possible, and even likely, if his antipathy to the relics derived from a conviction that the saints were too high exalted, that he would also speak against the relics. *Sed et quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem*, Leo's disparagements would have far-reaching effects, and it may be possible to detect some of those effects, even to learn something from them of Leo's *rationale*.

It was during the years 726-730 that Mansur, Saint John of Damascus, composed his three treatises *De Imaginibus* in defence of the icons.⁹ Although primarily concerned with images, the treatises (especially I and III) have something to say about saints, and at one point provide a very striking and rather audacious defence of their cult.¹⁰ This merits attention because it probably provides a hint that the cult was being questioned and a clue as to why. Leo's aversion to icons is well known to have derived from a conviction that an icon constituted a graven image, and was therefore in default of the second commandment of the Mosaic Decalogue. Now Leo had a profound respect for the Judaic Law: so much so that he caused a summary of it, in terms of Old Testament quotations, to be appended to his new law-book of 726, the *Ecloga*. From John's defence of the saints, one wonders if Leo's antipathy to them arose from a conviction that they were as much in default of the first commandment as were the icons of the second. "Thou shalt have no other gods but me" is a thoroughly categorical imperative which might well seem to have been transgressed by excessive devotions paid (primarily) to the Holy Mother, and then to all the saints. John meets this charge head on by conceding the point and then redefining it: (οἱ ἅγιοι) καὶ θεοὶ λέγονται ἀληθῶς... οὐ φύσει, ἀλλὰ θέσει!¹¹ —

⁹ PG 94: 1227-1420

¹⁰ PG 94: 1264ff

¹¹ Concerning the saints and the honour which is due to them and their relics, John argues that they are children and friends of God, so if God is King of Kings and Lord of Lords etc., πάντως καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι θεοὶ τε καὶ κύριοι καὶ βασιλεῖς ... οὐ φύσει ἀλλ' ὡς τῶν παθόντων βασιλεύσαντες ..., and having thus preserved their divine image intact. *De Fide Orthodoxa* 4.15: PG 94:1164ff.

in a passage which seems to have been calculated to neutralise a charge of polytheism against the cult of saints.

John has quite a lot to say in these treatises about relics; he obviously realised that, if it had not already happened, the way his opponents' minds were working, the logic of their dialectic would sooner or later drive them to question the validity of relics, but he is not so much concerned with the physical relics of the saints (of which he says very little) as with secondary relics, such as the instruments of the passion, and these even Constantine V is never said to have impugned. From the way in which John argues from devotion to the relics (both primary and secondary) to devotion to the icons, however, he does not seem to have felt that the relics were in any immediate danger.¹² From this one would suspect that the last part of Theophanes' allegation is either untrue or (which is unlikely) that John knew nothing of it.

After 730, things changed rapidly, though perhaps not so rapidly as one might think. As Professor Mango has pointed out, "apart from the removal of the Chalkê image, no specific cases of image-breaking are recorded during (the reign of Leo) nor are there any authenticated cases of persecution."¹³ This is not quite true, because in 730 the Patriarch Germanus was forced into retirement for failing to agree with Leo's icon-policy. Germanus resigned on 17 Jan. 730 in protest also against Leo's attempt to arrogate what Germanus adjudged to be the prerogative of an oecumenical council. Theophanes indicates that he was *exiled* to his private estate.¹⁴ In retirement he composed a treatise *De haeresibus et synodis* which is of considerable importance for the purposes of this study because it contains (so far as I am aware) the one and only allegation of action against the icons emanating from within the first period of iconoclasm:

Those who have become puffed up with arrogance do not desist from

¹² PG 94: 1264-1265.

¹³ Cyril Mango, "Historical Introduction", p. 3, in *Iconoclasm*, ed. Anthony Bryer and Judith Herrin (Birmingham, 1975.)

¹⁴ Theophanes 1:409, 7-11; 362, 27; 408, 27.

arousing dissensions amongst the people. Separating themselves off in companies of like-minded people, they voluntarily err in their knowledge of the truth; they dare to lay their hands on sacred things which have been dedicated to God. Wherefore, by the ruler himself, and by every official charged with authority in a subordinate capacity, a furious anger has been contrived against those who have determined to lead a devout life. Because of this, danger and destruction threatens the whole *oikoumenê* since most of the priests and laity, and especially the God-fearing men who live under the monastic rule, have been driven from their homes to wander at large like indigent aliens; they have had their limbs cut off and been driven into exile and solitude. Those who ostensibly interpret the proclamation [of 726?] are no longer satisfied with merely overthrowing the images of saints which (according to the law) were to be removed. They scrape off the paintings which rival the statues, the finest adornments of the most honourable churches. Moreover, when they had indiscriminately removed the figured coverings of the holy tables within the sacred sanctuaries, covers embroidered all over with figures in gold and purple, they put them in their own houses, because likenesses of the saints have been found on them. In addition to these things, they were not ashamed to commit a deed which is replete with all unholiness (*τὸ πάσης ἀνοσιουργίας ἀνάμεικτον*). The relics of the blessed and ever-memorable martyrs, gathered up by the teachers of the church, were denuded of the precious containers in which they were kept and consigned to the flames. [These men] were diligent to trample down and to dishonour the champions of the faith. But the Lord will not send forth the rod of sinners upon the portion of the just, for after the distress and violent disorder of the present I know well that the brightness of his great goodness will shine forth more clearly, and the blessed and sole Ruler will deliver his people, tossed about in this storm; for wickedness will not become so deeply rooted that it will prevail over the power of good.¹⁵

As Germanus died in 733, this passage, if it is authentic, can only refer to the reign of Leo III. Much therefore depends on whether or not it is authentic. From his remark quoted above, Professor Mango clearly thinks it is not. J. Gouillard has also expressed the opinion (though without giving reasons) that it is an interpolation.¹⁶ Stephen

¹⁵ Germani Patriarchae CPoleos, *De haeresibus et synodis* c. 42: PG 98:80.

¹⁶ *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965), 306, n. 59.

Gero, drawing attention to its bareness and lack of detail, at first inclines to a similar conclusion, but goes on to say that in the absence of any anachronisms “we shall assume the passage comes from Germanus”.¹⁷ Frankly, I do not think we can assume any such thing. In addition to the points already raised by Gero, there are others which cast strong doubts on its authenticity. There is its strong resemblance to charges made against Constantine V (especially by Theophanes) decades later; there is its incompatibility with what little we know of the cautious way in which Leo (unlike Constantine) went about everything he undertook; there is the total lack of any corroborating evidence from even near-contemporary authorities that Leo permitted the rifling of churches and the persecution of monks mentioned here, or even that he ever expressed any disfavour towards the monks. All the indications seem to point to the iconoclastic movement having only cautiously passed into its second stage during the years 730-733, and yet this passage portrays that movement as having already reached the full flower of its fury, characteristic (*pace* the ninth-century writers) of the later 760s.

The most suspicious part of the Germanus-passages however, is at the very end, in the confident prediction of better times ahead. Here one seems to detect the distinctive *allure* of Byzantine apocalyptic writings in which, with the conviction of hindsight, that which has already come to pass is predicted by one who poses as some noted person long time dead. In short, whatever might be thought of the rest of *De haeresibus*, c. 34 is hardly likely to have been written by Germanus, but more likely by somebody to whom Germanus’ carefully concealed manuscript had passed, when he felt that the time was ripe for publishing it, a time possibly to be identified with the virtual accession of Irene (ἡ αἰθρία τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀγαθότητος, ?)¹⁸ in September of 780.

This does not by any means invalidate c.34 for the purposes of this study. Whilst rejecting it as valid testimony of conditions in 730-733, one can allow that it might well provide near-contemporary evidence of the latter half of Constantine’s reign. It may provide a cogent

¹⁷ *BT* p. 89, n. 27.

¹⁸ *De haeresibus* c. 42; *PG* 98:80C.

indication that at *that* time the relics, or at least some relics, were destroyed. But it is worth noting that nothing is said in c.34 of dishonouring the Holy Mother and all the saints. It was not to achieve that end (though it was accidentally attained) "Germanus" implies, that relics were burned. It was rather to disencumber precious and covetable reliquaries of their grisly contents, prior to their joining the sanctuary-hangings in rich men's houses. In a word, there is no suggestion here of a systematic relic-persecution with its own *raison d'être*; only of their incidental destruction in the course of common sacrilege. The likelihood of imperial authority having countenanced such lawlessness is not great, as we shall see.

Leo III died on 18 June 740 and was succeeded by Constantine his son, co-emperor *de jure* since 720, *de facto* possibly for seven or eight years prior to 740. Given the different natures of the two Isaurians, it is to be anticipated that there should be some shift in imperial policy under the young emperor which (so far as religious matters were concerned) it might have been possible to anticipate already in the years immediately prior to 740.

Saint John of Damascus lived well into the first decade of the new reign, possibly to 749, but certainly not beyond 753. It was at the end of his life (if Jugie is correct)¹⁹ that he added a fourth book to his treatise *De Fide Orthodoxa*. By its lack of system, so characteristic of Books I-III, and by its apparently haphazard treatment, indiscriminately of matters which had or had not been dealt with in the earlier books, Book IV suggests that it was a latter-day appendix undertaken to set out what John considered to be the orthodox position in areas which had probably remained undisputed twenty years earlier, but which were now, in the 740s coming under attack from certain quarters.

The one important difference (for the purposes of this study) is that John now felt obliged to come to the defense of the holy relics. He had, as we have seen, defended the honour due to such secondary relics as the instruments of the passion in 726-730, not so much against attack (so far as we can see) but rather to provide grounds on which to base his arguments in favour of icons. Now he feels

¹⁹ DTC 8/1:698.

compelled to assert the validity of the physical relics, not as a means to an end, but as a necessary consequence of the honour due to the saints, which he previously defends with vigour in the same chapter. "The Lord Christ endowed us with the relics of the saints as salutary springs, pouring forth a diversity of benefits, flowing with sweet-smelling myrrh". How can this be doubted, he asks, when God caused water to spring out of a hard rock, and gave Samson to drink from the jaw-bone of an ass?²⁰

Since we know of almost nobody who had ever doubted the validity of the holy relics up to his time, the presence of this passage may well indicate that by the 740s there were those who doubted it, as there were those who questioned the honour customarily accorded to the saints. Moreover, it may be possible to detect in what John writes here one of the arguments then being advanced against the physical relics. Immediately after his defence of the relics he continues (the break in the Migne text here conceals the connection): "In the Law [of Moses] every-one who touches a dead body is unclean" [Numbers 19]. Now physical contact was a very important component of relic-devotion, for it was often by contact that the essential *dynamis* of the relic was held to be communicated to the devotee, and use of the myrrh which exuded from certain relics (which he has emphasised in the previous passage) was a form of extended physical contact. From the way in which the first-generation iconoclasts have already been seen to have argued from the Law of Moses against the saints and against their icons, is it not possible that those of the second generation may have used similar arguments against relics, *i.e.*, that they were corpses, and therefore defiled a man? This would explain why John goes to such lengths to explain (as he ought not to have had to for Christians) that the saints are not dead in the usual sense of the word, and therefore their bodies do not defile.

There may be another clue to the way in which thinking was turning against the saints and their relics in John's words. He concludes the section on these matters, rather unnecessarily one might feel, by listing the saints for his readers; first the Holy Mother,

²⁰ *De Fide Orthodoxa* IV. PG 94: 1164, 1165A

then John the Baptist followed by the Apostles, the Martyrs, *imprimis* Stephen the protomartyr, "Our holy fathers the God-bearing ascetics" (quoting Hebrews 11³⁷), and finally, the patriarchs, prophets and righteous men "who lived before grace," i.e., the Old Testament heroes.²¹ One of the marked differences between the eastern and western churches is the way in which the former did (and the latter did not) grant those heroes a place amongst the saints and all that this entails (shrines, commemorations, relics etc.). The main, though not the only, reason for the eastern church's partiality for those of the old covenant was that in the fifth century the capital of the east came into possession of the relics of many Old Testament heroes and cherished them within her walls.²² John's insistence on including those heroes amongst the saints may indicate that the honours addressed to them at their shrines were particularly obnoxious to the opposition; it is a matter to which reference will have to be made again.

Who were "the opposition!" If one is to believe the Patriarch Nicephorus, writing in the second decade of the ninth century, the Emperor Constantine V himself, the "Mammon" of Nicephorus' *Antirrhети*,²³ was bitterly opposed not only to icons, but to the cult of saints and of their relics. It is generally conceded that the *Antirrhети* do contain some material which originated from the emperor himself, possibly even the actual text of those *peuseis* which he placed before the council of Hiereia. As Nicephorus may have had the advantage over us of having the actual minutes of that council before his eyes, his testimony merits careful attention. The difficulty lies in distinguishing exactly what "Mammon" was saying in 754 from what he is supposed to have done in later years. Lombard came to the conclusion that "Mammon", or at least those

²¹ *ibid.*, PG 94: 1168A.

²² The best known instances are those of the relics of Samuel acquired in 406 (Jerome, *Contra Vigilantium* c 5, PL 23:343) and of Joseph and Zachariah ten years later (*Marcellini Comitis Chronicon* p 72; *Chronicon Paschale* 572, 15-573, 2.) There are many other examples, eg. relics of Isaiah, Daniel, Ananias, Azarias & Misael, - all in the fifth century.

²³ PG 100: 206-373.

who advised him, held views almost identical with those alleged of Leo III by Theophanes: that he would deprive the Holy Mother of the title *Theotokos*, forbid prayers to her and to the saints and seek the abolition of their relics.²⁴ Stephen Gero, working on the basis of Ostrogorsky's isolation of the *peuseis* from the *Antirrhetici*,²⁵ has pointed out that Lombard's conclusion is ill-founded, and that the *peuseis* in fact say nothing at all about relics, very little about the saints.²⁶ Nor is that other document which sets out Constantine's position in 754 much help either, the *Nouthesia* by which he is supposed to have projected his pre-conciliar propaganda-campaign into the provinces, for this too says not a word about relics, and not much more about saints. One might conclude from this that these were not matters to which the Council of Hieria was invited to address its attention.²⁷

Yet, curiously enough, when the Council came to formulate its decisions, it said something of both, in a passage the importance of which has not (I think) been fully appreciated. The seventeenth of the appended *anathemata* reads thus:

If any one does not confess that all the saints (those from the beginning to the present time, those from before the Law and those who lived during the Law, as well as those who by grace have been pleasing to God) are honourable in his sight in soul and body, and if he does not entreat their prayers as having audience, according to the tradition of the Church, to intercede for the sake of the world — let him be *anathema*.²⁸

The purpose of this *anathema* (which should be read in conjunction with *anathema* 15, re-affirming the traditional position of the *Theotokos*) is two-fold. It is to vindicate the intercessions of saints, but it is also to endorse the validity of their relics. This

²⁴ Alfred Lombard, *Etudes d'histoire byzantine: Constantin V, Empereur des Romains 740-775* (Paris, 1902), pp. 114-119.

²⁵ Georg Ostrogorsky, *Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Bilderstreites* (Breslau, 1929).

²⁶ *BP*, ch. 3.

²⁷ *BP*, pp. 24ff.

²⁸ Mansi 13: 348DE

presumably was the intent of adding the words "and body" to the phrase "honourable in his sight", but it may also be the *sous-entendu* of "those from before the Law and those who lived during the Law", for, as noted above, Constantinople was particularly rich in relics of those who lived "before grace", and may well have been by the eighth century the principal *lieu* of their cult within the Empire.

It will of course have been noted that what the Council affirmed in *Anathemata* 15 & 17 is almost identical with what John of Damascus affirmed in *De Fide Orthodoxa* 4.15, the very same John who was anathematised by that council, by name, at one and the same time! Against whom then were *Anathemata* 15 & 17 directed? Lombard thought it was against the emperor himself. Constantine appears to have declared before the council that he would be ruled by its decisions, even if they went against his personal inclinations;²⁹ it is therefore not impossible that the assembled fathers might have disagreed with him in some matters, but was this one of them? As we have seen, there is little indication that Constantine had expressed strong opinions on these matters prior to and/or at the Council. If he had done so, it is conceivable that the Council might have tactfully passed them over in silence, but it is surely unlikely that the known views of the emperor would have been confronted with the iron wall of *anathema*; unlikely, dangerous and possibly unnecessary. The very existence of *Anathemata* 15 & 17 (likewise of *De Fide Orthodoxa* 4.15) indicates that there were people abroad who held these erroneous views, but the existence of the former suggests that the emperor was not (at least publicly) one of them.

Was he in fact keeping his views to himself, biding his time until he could put them into practice as Lombard (following Nicephorus) believed? It is possible that to a certain extent he was, for the seventeenth *anathema* of 754 was said (in 787) subsequently to have been somewhat diluted into a less forceful form.³⁰ There is also the near-contemporary evidence of the *Oratio ad Constantinum Cabellinum*.³¹ Once falsely attributed to John of Damascus, this

²⁹ *BF*, p. 38; Ostrogorsky, *op. cit.*, fragment 23; *Antirrheticus* 2.3, PG 100: 340 C

³⁰ *BF* p. 147

³¹ PG 95: 338ff

document can now be dated with some confidence to the period 775 to 787, for on the one hand it shows that Constantine's alleged decrees against the invocation of saints are no longer in force and that this emperor has already died, whilst on the other hand the writer betrays no knowledge of the Council of 787 having yet taken place. Its accusations against Constantine are not light:

Once he acceded to empire his arrogance was revealed to all. He sent out a proclamation to every province in his sway that everybody was to subscribe to a for-swearing and rejection of the *proskynesis* of holy images. And as we today say 'Let us go to the All-holy Theotokos' to pray' or 'to Holy Apostles' or 'to the Holy Forty martyrs' or 'to the Holy Protomartyr Stephen's', this guileful man would not bear to hear such a thing, but took away the name of 'saint' from the saints. Panagia he called Theotokos, and said she could offer no aid after her death, and that neither the holy apostles nor any of the blessed ones could offer intercessions on our behalf, for they had profitted none but themselves by their sufferings, to the extent of saving their own souls from hell. Thus they were of no benefit to those who called upon them and went running to them.³²

It has to be borne in mind that we are dealing here with the oldest extant complete document (other than the *Horos* of 753) relevant to the reign of Constantine; "mais les renseignements que nous y trouvons ont un caractère fortement légendaire" opined Lombard. All to the good for present purposes; it is less than strictly accurate, strongly antagonistic to Constantine, and therefore can be fairly relied upon to say the worst that was then believed of him, which is presumably what the passage quoted above does. But it does it without saying a word about relics, which should surely not have been the case if the writer had heard any such word. Therefore, no matter how far Constantine might have gone in disparaging the saints, he appears not to have publicly impugned nor to have damaged their relics.

This is perhaps rather flimsy evidence, but there is much stronger. The near-proof of Constantine's innocence concerning relic-confiscations and so forth is to be found in the actual proceedings of

³² PG 95: 337CD.

the Council of 787. When the *horos* of 753 was being read out and commented on clause by clause by Epiphanius the Deacon, Constantine V was 13 years dead, the iconoclasts were firmly in power, so he had nothing to fear. Fear he does not; without actually naming names, he catalogues the evils which had been perpetrated in the wake of 753. It is an awesome list of atrocities and sacrilege, and a long one (almost a whole column in Mansi) in which Epiphanius visibly warms to his theme:

What language is able to narrate these tragedies? Where and how shall I begin describing every one of these? Agitation and fear, persecutions, confinement of the monks in every city, flogging of them and the imprisonment for many years with their legs tied up in chains; destruction of holy utensils, burning of books, turning of holy churches into places of common utility and profane alteration of chaste monasteries to worldly hovels.....³³

He continues this Jeremiad at some length, leaving (it seems) no stone unturned, and yet, for all that, not a single charge does he make concerning the holy relics, which are never even mentioned.

Now we are not here dealing with something “*de caractère fortement légendaire*”, but with the official documents of a high council under imperial patronage. It is scarcely conceivable that, had there been any assault on the relics in former times either by word or by deed, it would not have been mentioned here, for (see below) it would have provided a veritable *pièce de résistance* and climax for the charge sheet, as something yet more terrible than all the other irregularities. Admittedly, the silence of Epiphanius the Deacon in 787 does not establish the innocence of Constantine V and his sympathisers in the matter of the relics beyond all reasonable doubt. Silence cannot do that, and *en revanche* it must be noted that in the ninth century *Passio Sancti Andreae in Crisi*, “the paradigm of iconophile monk pitted against iconoclastic emperor,”³⁴ there is a catalogue of iconoclast crimes similar to Epiphanius’ which also omits any reference to relics. It does however open up the possibility that Constantine may have been innocent on this count. The next

³³ Mansi 13: 328E-329D

³⁴ AASS Oct. viii, 135-142. cc. 4.5; *BF* p. 128

step must be to examine the bases on which the ninth-century charges of leipsanoclasm against him rested.

It might however be useful first to ask whether he is likely to have been guilty of those charges. There is after all, a world of difference between icons and relics. Of the icons, it could be said that there was a time when they were not, and that they were an innovation made by human hands. The holy relics, on the other hand, dated from the earliest Christian times (e.g. the Wood of the True Cross) and even way back into the old dispensation, for many relics of Old Testament heroes were revered at Constantinople. Nor could the mortal remains of man, God's ultimate creation, by any stretch of the imagination be said to have been the work of human hands. Church fathers of impeccable orthodoxy had taught that the healing *dynamis* of saints lived on in their bones³⁵ and generations of Christians had proved this to their own satisfaction by the many miraculous cures which the relics had wrought for them. The validity of the holy relics was never at any time (with the possible exception of the reigns of Leo and Constantine) questioned in the Eastern Church,³⁶ nor, Leo and Constantine notwithstanding, was it ever the teaching of that church that things were otherwise.

Many of the holy relics, of which the imperial capital was the chief repository, had been endowed upon that City by imperial munificence, and some of the most outstanding ones amongst them

³⁵ e.g. John Chrysostom, *Laudation magnae et sanctae martyris Drosidis* (PG 50:686), and Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catacheses* 18.16 (PG 33: 1036B - 1037A), referring to 2/4 Kings 13.20-21. There is a similar exegesis of the same passage in *Constitutiones Apostolicae* 6.30 (PG 5: 988-989.)

³⁶ "Nul n'a songé à mettre en doute leur authenticité [cà.d des reliques.] La littérature byzantine n'a jamais produit un ouvrage comparable au *De pignoribus sanctorum* de Guibert de Nogent ..." Louis Bréhier, *La Civilisation byzantine* (Paris, 1950, 1970) p. 226. Yet the Emperor Maurice seems to have been somewhat sceptical concerning the healing properties of the celebrated relics of Saint Euphemia, until he was won over by their beneficial effects upon his arthritis (Theophylact of Simocatta, 8.14). See also Henri Grégoire in *Mélanges Lefort, Le Muséon* 59 (1946), 295-302.

were actually housed within the imperial palace.³⁷ To have impugned the relics would have been to denigrate the imperial patrimony. To have harmed them would have been to commit an act of sacrilege too awful to contemplate. This is illustrated by a passage in the *Andrew Salos Apocalypse*. This document, composed at the end of the ninth century or early in the tenth, looks to the end of this creation, and describes the seven reigns which will herald in the consummation of the *aeon*. The seventh ruler will be the wickedest of them all, a female from Pontus called Mondion; her atrocities are colourfully described in mounting degree of severity. Her first atrocity will be the defilement of altars, *i.e.* desecration of the consecrated buildings. Her second will be the confiscation of the vessels, chalices and other equipment used in the divine services. Thirdly, she will take down the icons and crosses (thus she will outreach the wickedness of the iconoclastic emperors, who at least revered the holy cross). Fourthly, she will burn the holy books, even including the Gospels. Only after and beyond that will she proceed to her fifth and yet worse atrocity; significantly, the only one in which she will be frustrated: she will search for the relics of the saints with intent to destroy them. But these, presumably because they are more precious than anything that has been destroyed so far, the “invisible power of God” will have conveyed to a secret place beyond her reach, and will be saved. In her frustration, she will proceed to one yet more terrible abomination; she will throw down the altar of the Great Church of the Divine Wisdom (the writer leaves one free to infer a seventh and

³⁷ The Palatine church of the Theotokos at the Lighthouse which was to house the most illustrious collection of relics in the Capital was not built until the reign of Constantine V it seems, but prior to the Isaurian epoch, what later came to be known as the Oratory of Saint Stephen at Daphne (*i.e.* in the oldest part of the Sacred Palace) was the repository of some significant relics and sacred *memorabilia*. It was probably there that the Wood of the True Cross, the Sponge and the Lance, relics which arrived in the time of Heraclius, were originally conserved. The belief that the right hand of Saint Stephen was housed there prior to the eighth century is probably erroneous. See John Wortley, “The Trier Ivory reconsidered,” *GRBS*

unspeakable evil).³⁸ Admittedly this is evidence drawn from a popular and unsophisticated literature, and only representative of popular devotion, but John of Damascus draws up an hierarchy of sanctity in *De Imaginibus* III of a rather different kind, and here too the relics occupy a more exalted place than icons. In reverse order to that in which he gives them, the seven degrees of those things/persons which command honour are: 7) benefactors of those in need; 6) authorities and powers; 5) our neighbours; 4) icons; 3) the holy gospels; 2) all holy places, material and physical relics (ὅτι θείας ἐνεργείας εἰσὶ δοχεῖα,) and 1) the saints themselves, as partakers of the nature of God.³⁹ by this scheme sacrilege against the relics would be yet more wicked even than that against the holy gospels.

In view of their sanctity and their imperial character, it seems rather unlikely that the relics would have been assaulted. There is however some external indication that relics may have been rather in disfavour at Constantinople under the Isaurian emperors. There is on the one hand not a single alleged case of relic-importation to the capital during their reigns, whilst on the other hand, the same period (717-775) saw a temporary cessation of the customary dissemination of relics from the capital.⁴⁰ The former point is not very serious, for even if Constantine and/or Leo had performed the good work of endowing the city with relics, the hostility of the chroniclers would probably have concealed the fact. Also, the cessation in relic-importation covers a wider period than that of the Isaurians. Heraclius was the last in the tradition started by

³⁸ *Vita Sancti Andreae Salic* 220. PG 111: 864 B-D. There are obvious echoes of the iconoclast emperors here of course, but also of some earlier ones too e.g. of Julian the Apostate, who "commanded that the holy ornaments should be taken to the imperial treasury, and ordered the spacious church built by Constantine [the Great] to be closed," and who also "committed an act of indecency by the holy altar:" Theodoret, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 3.2. Note also that "Germanus" describes sacrilege against the holy relics as τὸ πάσης ἀνοσιουργίας ἀνάμεικτον (*De haeresibus* c. 42, PG 98:80C)

³⁹ *De Imaginibus* 3. 33-39; PG 94: 1352ff.

⁴⁰ A. Frolov, *La relique de la vraie Croix: recherches sur le développement d'un culte* (Paris, 1961), p. 87.

Constantius (not Constantine) of providing relics,⁴¹ and it was not revived until the advent of the Macedonian Emperors, whence it continued to 1204. As for the dissemination of relics from Constantinople, these were mostly fragments of the Holy Wood, a relic which Constantine is known to have employed for his own purposes,⁴² and could hardly therefore be said to have been in disfavour. How then did the Isaurian emperors gain the reputation of having harmed the relics? or perhaps one should put the question this way: how did the legend of Constantine's *leipsanomachy* come into existence?⁴³

Just as there is no smoke without fire, there is no legend without a grain, or several grains of truth contained within it. Perhaps the first grain of truth to consider is this: that there is certain indication that there were persons abroad, significant persons, who, down to 787, were known to be antipathetic to relics. The proceedings of the Seventh Ecumenical Council (787) reflect no major concern with the relics, but make it clear that they were an important secondary issue. At the first session, the three iconoclast bishops who were re-instated made specific statements on this matter in their recantations, of which that by Theodosius of Armorium was the most thorough:

Likewise also I venerate and honour and salute the relics of the saints as of those who fought for Christ and who have received grace from him, for the healing of diseases and the curing of sickness and the casting out of devils, as the Christian Church has received from the

⁴¹ It is likely that some relics were transferred to the City for safety as the Saracens advanced, but no specific instance has come to my notice.

⁴² Constantine required oaths to be taken on the Wood of the True Cross; Theophanes 1: 437, 11-15; Nicephorus Patriarchês, *Breviarium* p. 73, 6-11; *Vita Sancti Stephani junioris* PG 100: 1112AB.

⁴³ Lombard (*op. cit.*, ch.2) detected and exposed a considerable amount of legendary material which had collected around the name of Constantine V. It is curious the way in which some emperors did attract legendary accretions to their memories whilst others did not. Few emperors, if any, attracted more than Constantine, which should make one all the more suspicious of anything, especially of anything derogatory, which is alleged of him, hence my initial scepticism concerning the allegation of *leipsanoclasm*.

holy Apostles and Fathers even down to us today.⁴⁴

Basil of Ancyra and Theodore of Myra made identical statements:

I ask for the intercessions of our spotless Lady the Holy Mother of God, and those of the holy and heavenly powers, and those of all the saints. And receiving their holy and honourable relics with all honour (τιμῆς) I salute and venerate these with honour (τιμητικῶς προσκυνέω) hoping to have a share in their holiness.⁴⁵

However, the worst these persons seems to have done by way of translating their former antipathy into action seems to have been to have "discontinued certain traditions which ought to be revived", namely, they had omitted the customary implantation of relics in consecrating new churches. The Council ruled that this fault should be mended and never be repeated in the future.⁴⁶ There is no indication of where or how often the fault had been perpetrated, but whether the emperor was aware of such errors or not, it was he who was ultimately responsible for them.

The second grain of truth to bear in mind is the vicious dissolution of some monasteries which took place in the later 760s, of which Theophanes gives a representative sample in the activities of Michael Lachanodraco.⁴⁷ There is no cause to suspect that what Theophanes says here is not substantially true. For reasons which cannot be precisely formulated, Constantine V hated monks, and, feeling perhaps that he had sufficient support for his action, set about laicising them, secularising their houses and no doubt expropriating their property. As the focal building of every monastery was its church, the destruction or misappropriation of consecrated buildings inevitably occurred. As every church contained at least some, and

⁴⁴ Mansi 12: 1014C

⁴⁵ Mansi 12: 1010

⁴⁶ Canon 7 of 787; Mansi 13: 427C. *c.f.* Nicephorus, *Antirrheticus* 2.5, PG 100: 344A: "He [Constantine] instructed that no such thing [as relics] should be set in the foundation of the holy tables of the venerable sanctuaries used in Christian worship." This is the earliest suggestion that Constantine was responsible for the omission of relics. Note that Canon 7 of 787 neither says nor implies that the omission had been universal in recent consecrations.

⁴⁷ Theophanes 1: 445, 3-446, 15

some many relics, it is to be anticipated that when the imperial agents took over those churches, over-zealous or careless servants of the crown, knowingly or otherwise, probably did on more than one occasion trample or burn or bury or drown certain relics; for it was axiomatic amongst their devotees that no matter how small a fragment might be, it possessed no less *dynamis* than the full corpse itself had done.⁴⁸ We have seen relics so small in our own time that they can scarcely be detected without spectacles; such one could destroy without knowing it. Although the process of fragmentation may not have yet gone so far in the eighth century, it had certainly progressed to a certain degree. An undiscerning officer might easily have borne off a fine reliquary to the imperial treasury without realizing that it still contained its relic, or have removed it under the impression that he was merely cleaning the container.⁴⁹ As it was on imperial orders that these monasteries were disaffected, so it must have been the emperor who was held responsible for the loss of any relics, which, as we have seen, was held in certain circles to be more severe than the loss of land, buildings, icons, chalices or even gospel-books.

⁴⁸ "The bodies [of the martyrs] are not contained each one in a single grave, but cities and villages having shared them out amongst themselves, call them savers of souls and the healers of bodies, honouring them as preservers of cities and guardians. By making intercessions to the Lord of all, they obtain divine gifts through them. Although the body has been divided up, the grace remains undivided; the smallest and most tenuous relic has the same power as the complete and undivided martyr. The grace which flourishes within it distributes the gifts, measuring the appropriate rewards in accordance with the faith of those who approach." Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 8, PG 83: 1012B.

⁴⁹ It is interesting to compare the alleged behaviour of the Latin conquerors over four centuries later, who certainly had no antipathy to the relics: "cum capta est Constantinopolis, exultabant victores Latini capta praeda, sicut qui invenerunt spolia multa. sed caeca cupiditas, quae facile persuadet, ita manus eorum victrices victas tenuit, ut non solum ecclesias violarent, immo etiam vascula in quibus sanctorum reliquiae quiescebant, impudenter effrangerent. aurum inde et argentum et gemmas turpiter eveillent, ipsas vero reliquias pro nihilo reputabant." (Anon., *Historia translationis reliquiarum Sancti Mamentis*, AASS Aug. III, 444). *caeca cupiditas* is rarely absent from the dissolutions of monasteries, it seems.

Bearing these 'grains of truth' in mind, we may now proceed to examine what Gero has correctly identified as the principal, most persistent and oldest specific charge of *leipsanoclasm* against the Isaurians: the despoliation of the relics of Saint Euphemia of Chalcedon.⁵⁰ If this charge can be refuted, little or nothing of substance remains with which to reproach those emperors in this matter. It should be noted that there is another, and not dissimilar, charge, equally widely made against Leo in particular: that of having burned the buildings, library and teachers of an educational establishment at Constantinople in 726. This having been now exposed to be a fiction (in the opinion of most scholars)⁵¹ it may be possible likewise to shake the credibility of the Saint Euphemia charge.

Its earliest extant form is in the *History of the relics of Saint Euphemia*, written by one Constantine of Tios (on the Black sea,) probably (on the basis of internal evidence) between 796 and 806.⁵² If the dating is correct, Constantine is the earliest of many writers who claimed that Constantine V was guilty of "burning and scattering the relics of the saints, discontinuing the vigils held for the glory of God and of the saints, deriding the sanctifying streams gushing-forth in accordance with God's provision for mankind, mocking those who made use of them as 'hydrolaters'".⁵³ But it is Leo III whom he accuses of despoiling the relics of Saint Euphemia, saying that he first removed them to the palace and then cast them into the sea, whence they were brought to safety on the island of Lemnos. The empty shrine was adapted to various secular uses.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ *BF* ch. VII

⁵¹ For the exposure of this *vieux canard*, see Louis Bréhier, "La légende de Léon l'Isaurien, incendiaire de l'Université de Constantinople," *Byzantion* 4 (1927-28) 13-28.

⁵² ed. François Halkin, *Euphémie de Chalcedoine: Légendes byzantines* (Brussels, 1965), pp. 81-106.

⁵³ c. 10. The extraordinary similarity of language here (p. 96, 4-14) and in an early passage in which Leo is accused (86-1-5) should be noted, and should enjoin caution.

⁵⁴ cc. 4,5

Substantially the story is the same in all subsequent recensions, but with one important difference: that *they* all attribute the sacrilege against Saint Euphemia to *Constantine*, not to his father. If they were right and Constantine of Tios mistaken in this respect, one might look for the origins of this story in the monastic dissolutions of the late 760s, except that nowhere is Saint Euphemia's spoken of as a monastery; but neither was it an ordinary parish church. As its hexagonal shape and lay-out demonstrate, it was essentially a *martyrion*, whose *raison d'être* was the relics which it housed. It was also a *martyrion* of considerable importance, not only on account of the decisive role which Saint Euphemia's relics had played in the Fourth Oecumenical Council, but also because a sweet-smelling blood-like liquor flowed from her tomb (located beneath the altar) whose healing effects gained her great popularity, enhanced perhaps by her relatively recent arrival in the city, early in the seventh century.⁵⁵

The purpose of Constantine of Tios' *History* is fairly clear. In 796, the Empress Irene restored the *martyrion* of Saint Euphemia (which implies yet another 'grain of truth', that prior to 796 this building was in a dilapidated condition,) and Constantine claims to have been present at the re-dedication.⁵⁶ There could be no restoration of a *martyrion* without the recovery of the relics it was meant to house, and their recovery was most probably that which occasioned the restoration. The *History* is clearly a *pièce justificative* intended to establish the authenticity of the recovered relics, taking up the familiar *topos* of relics which float to their intended destination and/or safety over the sea. In order to explain how they came to be cast into the sea he has conflated the 'grains of truth' mentioned above into the legend of a relic-hating emperor who maliciously desecrated the shrine, a legend which was widely accepted in the ninth century,

⁵⁵ Raymond Janin, *La Géographie Ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantin* I.iii, *Les Eglises et Monastères*, second edition (Paris, 1969) pp 120-124. (*n.b.* there was also a church, or oratory, of Saint Euphemia within the Palace, *en tei Daphei*, which may in some way be connected with Constantine of Tios' allegation that Leo III first took the relics into the Palace.)

⁵⁶ Theophanes 1:440, 1-10

but which should be prudently rejected in the twentieth, for the following reasons.

First we may note (as Bréhier did of the alleged burning of the "University of Constantinople")

.... que cette anecdote est en contradiction formelle avec tout ce que nous savons des premières mesures iconoclastes de Léon l'Isaurien. Ce fut avec une certaine prudence qu'il opéra d'abord, et les révoltes qui éclatèrent en Grèce, dans les îles, en Italie après la publication de l'édit de 726, rendirent cette prudence encore plus nécessaire. Avant sa mort (740) il y eut sans doute quelques conflits sanglants, mais la persécution systématique des partisans des icones ne date réellement que de Constantin V.⁵⁷

If, as subsequent writers claim, it were Constantine who desecrated Saint Euphemia's and (as all imply) this was his most flagrant crime against the relics, why do we have to wait until a quarter of a century (or more) after his death until we hear of it, when many lesser crimes of his were well-known much earlier?

Secondly, what credence can be placed in the testimony of a man like Constantine of Tios who so readily believes the story of the saving of the relics? Admittedly, this is to question the greater part of mid-Byzantine authorities; perhaps one should rather ask, allowing for a measure of difference between the two that most people would allow, is Constantine to be reckoned amongst the chroniclers, or amongst the hagiographers? Clearly, the second, which absolves him of all but one obligation: to glorify his saint or, in this case, her relics. As the saint is glorified by a narration of the trials he has endured and the enemies he has withstood, so are the relics. Automatically, the emperor Leo/Constantine becomes a second Decius, a new Diocletian, the complete adversary. The 'facts' of the matter are irrelevant.

Lastly, there is a much simpler and more likely explanation of how Saint Euphemia's came to be dilapidated prior to 796. At the very end of Leo's reign, a particularly severe series of earthquakes hit Constantinople, which otherwise seems to have been spared this *fléau* between 611 & 790. Great damage was done and many churches and monasteries fell down, and Saint Irene's was at least

⁵⁷ Bréhier. *art. cit.*, p. 21.

partially ruined.⁵⁸ Is it not possible that the *martyrion* of Saint Euphemia was also badly damaged at that time? The collapse of the central roof over the hexagon would still leave surrounding areas which could afford some protection to those who sought it, the many whose homes had been rendered uninhabitable, for instance. Nicephorus Patriarchês says that most of the Byzantines fled the city and camped outside the walls whilst the earthquake lasted; it is possible that very few people actually saw Saint Euphemia's shaken down, thus leaving a fertile field for legend to sprout in. Also, if the disturbances did continue for twelve months, though the chronology is a little confused, that period could have included the death of Leo III on 18 June 740, thus creating the confusion as to which emperor was responsible for the damage at Saint Euphemia's. It is clear from the sources that the rebuilding of churches was not top-priority when the earthquakes ceased: the city-walls were. If the ancient and venerable Saint Irene's had to wait long into the reign of Constantine V before it was restored,⁵⁹ Saint Euphemia's may well have remained a ruin throughout and beyond that reign, in which case the saint's clients would naturally hold that emperor responsible for the state of her shrine near the Hippodrome.

Such then are the reasons for relegating the story of the desecration of Saint Euphemia's to the category of pious fiction. I am not suggesting that Constantine of Tios invented it; indeed, the variations in the extant versions suggest that he was merely retailing something which had become common knowledge, something which may very well first have been published in a sermon at the rededication-ceremonies at Saint Euphemia's in 796. For it is subsequent to that dedication that the legend of leipsanoclastm suddenly makes its existence clearly felt. The principal perpetrators of that legend are the following.

Stephen the Deacon, who wrote a *Life of Saint Stephen-the-less* ca 808, says very little about relics, and nothing of any general policy concerning the relics on the part of Constantine V. But he tells a

⁵⁸ Theophanes 1:412, 6-16; Nicephorus, *Breviarium* p. 59, 2-14; *Synaxaria* at 26 October.

⁵⁹ Janin, *op. cit.* p.104

story of how that emperor reacted angrily to the news that a relic of Saint Stephen (his victim) was being privately revered, and sought (in vain) to apprehend it. It is a good tale, probably with more to tell us about the way iconodoules' relics were honoured in the ninth century than of Constantine V's attitudes in the eighth.⁶⁰

Theophanes Confessor (closely followed by George the Monk) is the first, and most influential, of many who charge that Constantine would confiscate and bury the relics of the saints if it came to his attention that some relic of particular importance was efficacious for the healing of body or soul and was held in high esteem by devout people as is the custom. Likewise, he would threaten such people with death, as though they were guilty of impiety, with confiscation of their property, with exile and torture. The most God-beloved relic, cherished by those who possessed it as a treasure, he would remove, to be no more seen again.⁶¹

Clearly, Theophanes was thinking of the case of Saint Euphemia, for he goes on immediately to give his version of that story as though it were the outstanding example of Constantine's *leipsanomachy*. If he knew of other examples, he wrote nothing of them.

Nicephorus Patriarchês says nothing of the Saint Euphemia-affair in the *Breviarium*, which adds a further doubt to the authenticity of the story, nor in the *Antirrhetici*, which is surprising for he does there say that Constantine "even consumed their [the saint's] very holy and venerable relics with fire," and singled out for despoliation churches distinguished by icons and relics of the saints; he could have had Saint Euphemia's in mind, but if so, he says nothing of it.⁶²

The worst that Theosterictos, abbot of Medicus' monastery (ob. 824) has to say of Constantine's attitude to the relics is that "he was utterly scornful of them and reckoned them as worthless", not that he took any action against them.⁶³

It seems therefore that not even after the legend of the despoliation of Saint Euphemia's had gone into circulation had the

⁶⁰ PG 100: 1180C-1182C

⁶¹ Theophanes 1:439, 15-27

⁶² *Antirrheticus* 2.4.5; PG 100: 341D, 344A.

⁶³ *Vita Nicetae* c. 28, AASS Apl i, xxiv.

idea of Constantine as an active persecutor of the relics gained universal acceptance, even amongst those who were most definitely of the iconodoule persuasion. The present writer is of the opinion that this was for the simple reason that there was not a single well-authenticated case of either Leo or Constantine ever having set his hand against the relics; and since it is impossible to know what was going on in their heads, that is probably all that can be said of the matter.